

# SIGHT AND SOUND

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SUMMER 1935  
VOL. 4. No 14.



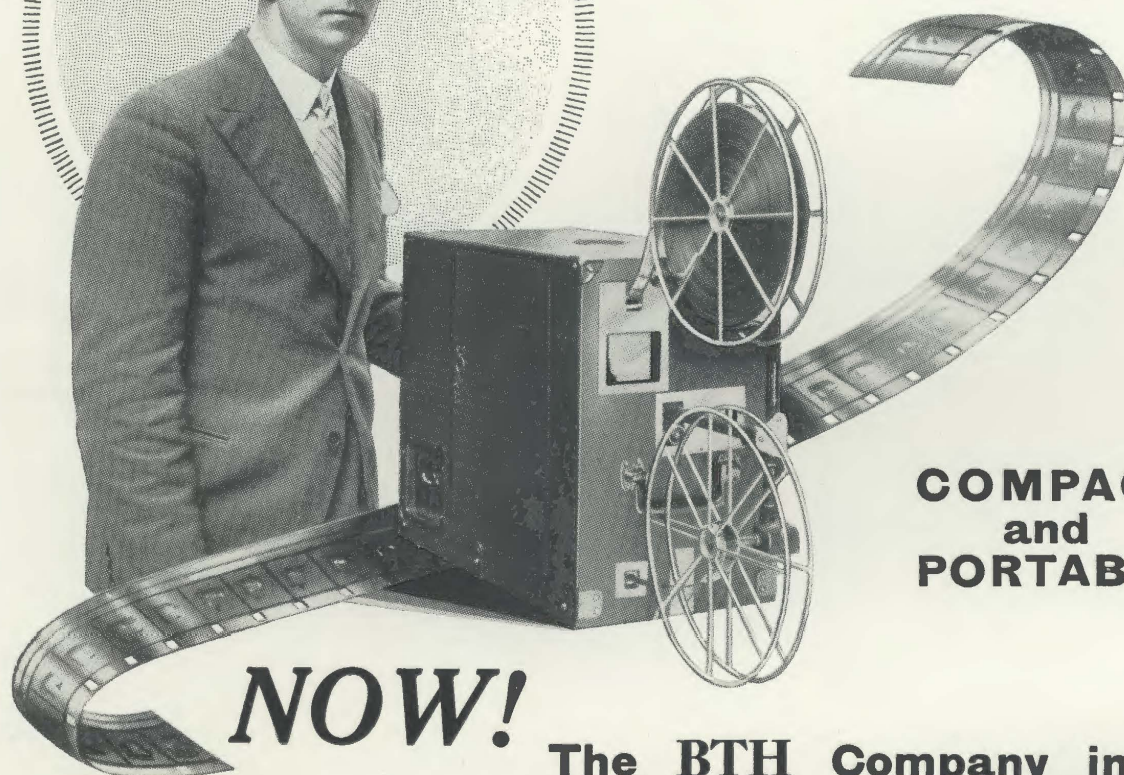
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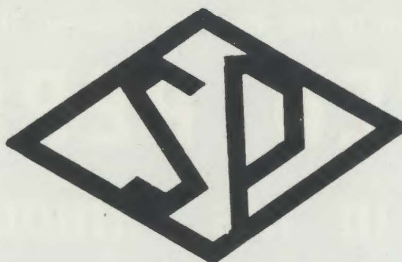


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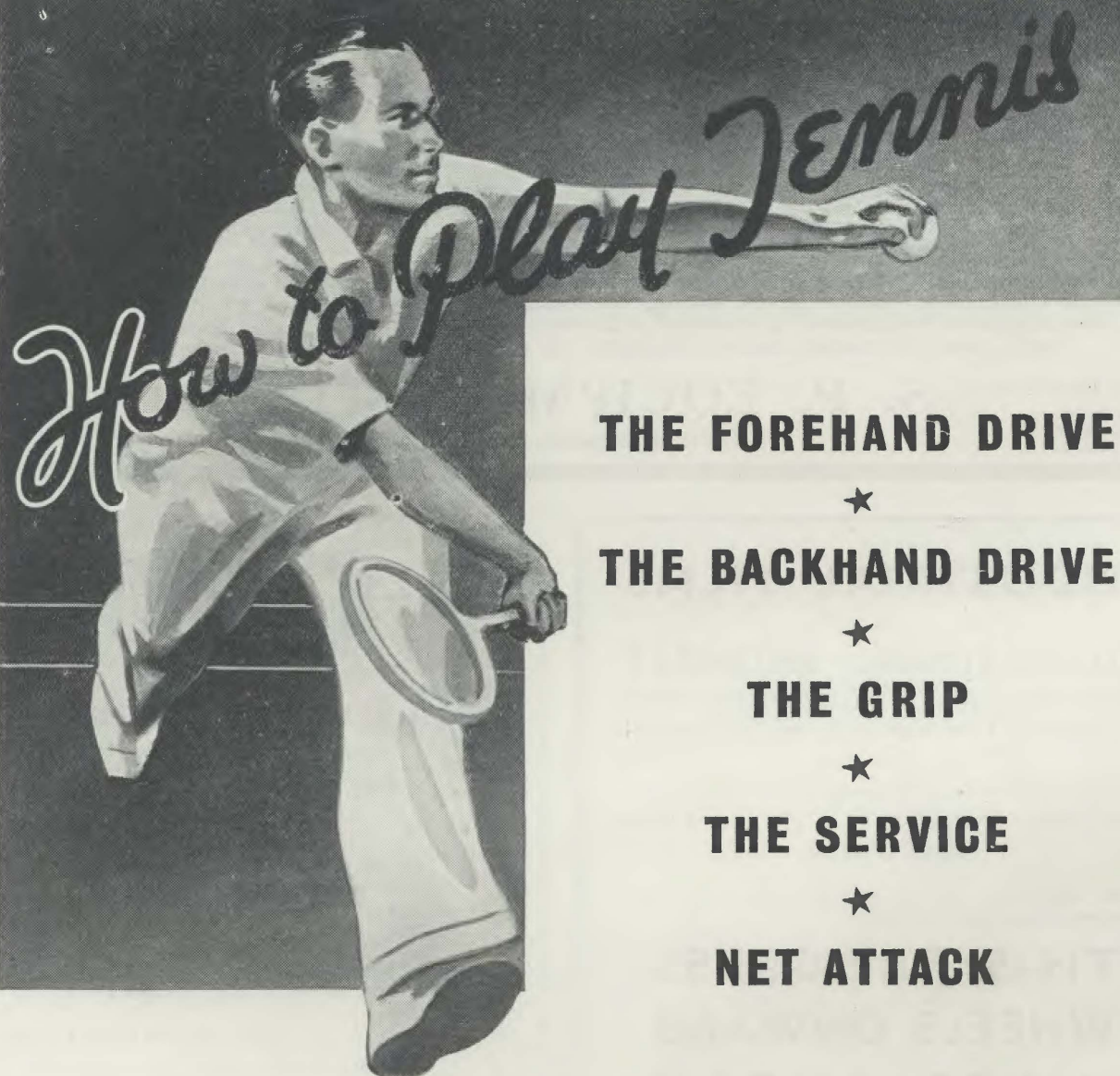
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FILMS AND THE SCHOOL: A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS

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## FREE TRADE IN EDUCATIONAL FILMS

THE passing by Parliament of Clause 7 of the Finance Act 1935 completes this country's ratification of the International Convention for Facilitating the Circulation of Educational Films which has been signed by twenty-five nations. More than this, Section 3 of Clause 7 provides for free trade in educational films between all parts of the British Empire and provides for such free trade without the films being submitted first to the International Institute at Rome. These provisions are of great importance not only to producers and distributors of non-fictional films in this country and to those who wish to use educational films from other countries, but also to all those who see in films, honestly and accurately presenting the life and outlook of the countries in which they were made, a most potent medium for spreading the knowledge of others which is an essential

prerequisite to better international relations.

Customs duties have constituted a serious obstacle to the production and circulation of educational films, the duties imposed being usually the same as those imposed on fictional films although the earning capacity of educational films, even in comparison with the production costs, is usually much less than that of fictional films. Production has been restricted by the size of the home market, the circulation of films made by, or with the assistance of, world-recognised authorities has been limited to the countries in which the authorities worked, and the mutual understanding of the peoples of the world which might be gained from films has largely depended on fictional films only.

No customs duty will be charged on the importation into the United Kingdom of any film which is certified by the Board



of Education. The British Film Institute has accepted the Board's invitation to assist them in certifying films under the Finance Act, for five years in the first instance.

The Board of Education may issue a certificate to any film made by a person established in any foreign country which has signed and ratified the International Convention, provided also that the film has been certified by the International Institute at Rome under Article 1 :—

"The present Convention shall apply to films, which, based on didactic methods, have eminently international educational aims and fall within one of the five following categories :

(a) Films designed to supply information with regard to the work and aims of the League of Nations and other international organisations which are generally recognised by the High Contracting Parties ;

(b) Films intended for use in education of all grades ;

(c) Films intended for vocational training and guidance, including technical films relating to industry and films relating to scientific management ;

(d) Films dealing with scientific or technical research or designed to spread scientific knowledge ;

(e) Films dealing with health questions, physical training, social welfare and relief."

Similarly, the countries which have signed and ratified the Convention undertake to admit, free of customs duties, any films made in the United Kingdom which have been certified by the International Institute. It is recommended by the International Institute that requests for a certificate should specify if the film in question has already been presented for examination to the national body, in the country in which it was made, which is responsible for certifying films as of educational character. It is reasonable to assume that the International Institute will be usually prepared to give a certificate to a film which has already been certified in the country in which it was made and also that the countries which have ratified the Convention will usually endorse the certificate of the International Institute, although, by the Convention, each country reserves the right to refuse exemption to any film under certain circumstances and conditions, which are set out in the Convention.

Free trade in educational films within the British Empire is much simpler since the films will not have to be submitted to the International Institute. A film

produced by a person established in the British Empire (and this includes mandated territories) may be certified by the Board of Education for exemption from Customs Duty if they are satisfied that the film is of an educational character and has been certified to be of such a character by the Government of the country in which the film was made. They must also be satisfied that the laws of the country provide for a corresponding exemption for films produced in the United Kingdom.

There can be little doubt that educationists and public opinion generally, especially in the non-producing countries in the Empire, will welcome free trade in educational films and will urge their governments to carry through, with the minimum of delay, the legislation that will be necessary, since without such free trade they can hardly begin to use films for educational purposes. But such legislation will not be effective unless certifying bodies are also appointed and unless all the certifying bodies of the Empire agree upon a definition of educational character by which they will assess films submitted to them. Using the definition of the International Convention as a basis, it should not be difficult to arrive at a definition—which might possibly be wider than the international one—which could be worked successfully if the various certifying bodies were generally alike in constitution and methods of working. This important work, for which there is in many parts of the Empire no patently suitable body already in existence, is one more argument for a chain of Film Institutes throughout the Empire, established to promote the fullest development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction.

The passing of Clause 7 of the Finance Act is significant official recognition of the film as a medium of education and of international understanding. A great responsibility lies now on the producers and distributors, on the various certifying bodies and on all those who have made for the film the claims which are now officially recognised.



Yvonne Printemps in *LA DAME AUX CAMELIAS*, directed by Fernand Rivers

(By courtesy of the Academy Cinema).



## NOTES OF THE QUARTER

### Synchrosound Orchestra

Film sound track has been turned to a new purpose and is now providing an invisible orchestra for living performers. Mme. Tina Lerner, the celebrated Russian pianist, recently demonstrated the possibilities in a recital at the Curzon Cinema. Her programme included the Concerto in B flat minor by Tschaikowsky, and the orchestral accompaniment, played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, under Shavitch, was reproduced from a film sound track recorded at the G-B. Instructional Studio. Background interference was not entirely eliminated from the reproduction, and one music critic has objected that it is not possible to "have collaboration between a thing done and a thing being done; experience to provide a musical interpretation must be simultaneous." Nevertheless, the experiment is an interesting one and as sound reproduction becomes perfect, its promoters hope that pianists will be able to enrich their recital programmes with concertos in those cities where an orchestra is not available.

The synchrosound system, which was created by Mr. Vladimir Shavitch, was first demonstrated with opera—invisible orchestra and chorus synchronised with living principals and introduced as "an innovation that may bring about a renaissance of opera in the English speaking world." Mr. Shavitch's idea is to put opera production on an economic basis, eliminating the expense of transporting

members of orchestra and chorus long distances from town to town. Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the recording of the first synchronised opera, Gounod's "Faust." The second, Bizet's "Carmen," has just been completed with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Shavitch.

### National Film Institute for I.F.S.

The need for a National Film Institute was recently outlined by Father S. Devane in an address broadcast from Dublin and relayed over the whole of the Free State. Broadly the functions of such an Institute, according to Father Devane, would be to control censorship of entertainment films and the use of the cultural cinema, to produce interest, teaching and scientific films, to preserve a collection of films of national importance and to build up a film library of cultural, educational, agricultural, industrial and public health films. "The film problem," he said, "is very complex and most important. It must be carefully examined from the particular angle of the circumstances of our people and their development." As a practical step he suggested a government enquiry with terms of reference on the following lines:

"To enquire into the whole problem of the Cinema in its various relations to national life, culture, education, agriculture, industry, film production and film distribution; furthermore, to examine the best means of establishing central control of the cinema through a National Film Institute and to report accordingly."



# NOTES OF THE QUARTER

## Preservation of Newspapers on Films

"Are we ready to preserve newspapers on films?" The feasibility of filming newspapers in order to preserve them as permanent records is discussed in an article-symposium headed by this question in the April issue of the *Library Quarterly* (U.S.A.). The proposal follows a survey made of the University of Chicago Libraries, and if adopted the scheme would be part of the systematic programme which has been organised to complete and extend their files of public documents, newspapers and maps. The initial phase of the newspaper programme called for subscriptions to twenty-five outstanding newspapers of the world and the acquisition of back files. But the permanent preservation of such files presented a baffling prospect, involving problems of perishability of paper and expenses of binding and accommodation. Progress in the filming of research records suggested the possibility that filming might offer the best and most economical method of preserving these newspaper acquisitions. Opinions of librarians were thereupon collected and a number of technical problems, such as the stability of the film, were raised. The question of costs also remains to be determined. In the meantime enquiries continue to be made by the University of Chicago Libraries regarding the co-operation which may be counted upon from librarians and newspaper publishers if the enterprise proves feasible.

## Berlin International Congress

A common spirit of co-operation seems to have been one of the most noteworthy features of the Berlin International Film Congress held in April. The most important of the positive results of the Congress brought about by this general feeling of common purpose was the unanimous decision to create an International Film Chamber, the organisation of which was entrusted to Germany until the next Congress (Paris 1937). It will be the task of this big international body to introduce and carry through all measures necessary to the interests of the international film industry. It is hoped that this international organisation may, in time, develop into the United Film States of Europe. The work of the Congress may therefore mark the beginning of a new era of international co-operation in all fields of cinematography.

## Empire Film Library

Three-quarters of a million people, of whom the great majority were children, visited the Imperial Institute last year and saw films of the day to day life of the Empire. Lt. Col. J. Colville, M.P., the President of the Board of Governors, quoted this figure in his address when presiding at the opening of the Empire Film Library by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester. "It is not enough," he continued "merely to show the Empire under one roof, for there are many schools and homes in the United

Kingdom to which a visit to London is difficult or impossible. So it is also necessary to send our Empire films out on loan to such schools."

The Duke of Gloucester, in declaring the Library open, said "I am glad to note that the board of governors have recognised the importance of one cardinal principle—namely the claims of the youth of these islands to a closer and clearer knowledge of the Empire overseas. To-day science has so far progressed that even the most distant corners of the Empire can be seen by any citizen who will take advantage of all the facilities at his disposal."

The films, which originally formed the Empire Marketing Board Film Library and which were passed to the G.P.O. at the close of the E.M.B.'s activities, will be supplied to schools and other approved bodies in this country, the only charge being the cost of their carriage to and from the Institute. The Library contains films of home production in industry and agriculture, films of the life and products of the Empire, and, in addition, Post Office films.

## Brighton School of Filmcraft

The film seems to be gaining recognition as a subject worthy of serious study. The Regent St. Polytechnic has run a school of cinematography for over two years, and we review elsewhere some of the films made by students and shown at a recent exhibition. We now hear that Brighton plans to teach film art.

Proposals for making an international college of art were revealed by Mr. E. A. Sallis Benney, Principal of the Brighton School of Art, in an address at Brighton. The course is intended to prepare men and women for architecture, sculpture, painting, town-planning and book production; artistic research work for industry is also mentioned. The most interesting proposal, however, is the establishment of a department of screen and theatrical training in which students will be taught cinematography and the principles of "property" and set designing, theatrical lighting and model making.

In explaining the scheme, Mr. Sallis Benney said: "The students of the last generation had no such artistic training, hence the tolerance of the antinaturalism, aspidistra, and the case of stuffed birds. This teaching will result in a demand for better designed goods, which the producer will not be slow to meet." It is also reasonable to suppose that as filmcraft is studied more widely and as more attention is given to the film as a creative art, one positive result will be an ultimate raising of public taste and a demand for better films—which the producer will not be slow to meet.

## Mr. Ramsbotham on Mechanical Aids in Schools

Important as the question of the school leaving age is, it should not monopolise public attention, said Mr. H. Ramsbotham, M.P., Parliamentary



## NOTES OF THE QUARTER

Secretary to the Board of Education. Speaking in the House of Commons during the Debate on Estimates, he voiced the fear that many people might come to think that until the age was raised nothing else much mattered. He suggested that pending a change in the age of leaving school, there are more than enough tasks of first rate importance to engage the attention of all educationists and to absorb for the moment all the money available. Wireless and the film are both potent instruments of education, but their influence at present is mostly outside the schools. A great deal remains to be done to explore their educational uses, and it would be unwise, said Mr. Ramsbotham to neglect the use of these mechanical aids in the schools. He emphasised that very few schools had cinematograph projectors, and that this country was greatly behind France and Germany in that respect. The supply of educational films was increasing, but it was useless to make educational films if the schools were not equipped to use them. He therefore urged that local authorities should give their attention to this question.

### Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association Conference

"Standards of film censorship must be somewhat different from those required in other forms of public entertainment which cater at the most for thousands, whereas you are catering for millions." Speaking at the Conference of the C.E.A., Mr.

E. Shortt said that he had come to the conclusion that it would be wrong for the Board of Film Censors to certify any film which would offend a reasonable number of reasonably-minded people. He was critical of the new type of gangster film which purported to show the determination of the Federal Government to stamp out gangster activities. Actually the whole of the gangster's gamut of crime was as prominently portrayed as before, and he considered the cumulative effect of this type of film highly undesirable. He also dealt with "horror" films, animal films and religious films, and in a review of the year's work of the Board of Film Censors discussed the various problems with which it was faced.

Mr. S. Rowson's paper on "The Future of the Films Act" was in the main a survey of the situation in Britain during the immediate post-war years, an analysis of the position created by the passing of the Films Act and an estimate of the steps to be taken to secure a continuance of its provisions after September, 1938, when the present measure is due to expire. The most important clauses of the Act are those which impose on renter and exhibitor the obligation to acquire and show respectively a minimum proportion of British films in relation to foreign films.

The Conference was held at Cardiff from June 24th to 28th.



A scene from *BECKY SHARP*, Radio Pictures' new technicolor film in which Miriam Hopkins plays the title role. Directed by Mamoulian



# RELIGIOUS FILMS

By The Right Rev. E. S. Woods, Bishop of Croydon

OF all the potent influences which are brought to bear on the thoughts and lives of the mass of mankind in the present age, possibly the greatest is that of the cinematograph. In all the long history of civilisation mankind has never before had at its disposal such an instrument for publicity and education. Here in our own country it is said that twenty million people visit the cinema every week.

It must also be seen that the cinema as a means of entertainment, does not constantly stimulate men's worst passions and instincts, nor drown them in a sea of inanities, futilities and false values.

## How is the Church using Films?

But it is not with educational and instructional films that this present article is concerned, but rather with the specific subject of religious films. How far is the Church using, and how far should the Church attempt to use the cinematograph as one of the means of carrying out its primary task of preaching and teaching the Christian religion? The answer to that question, in the present writer's view, is that the Church at present is doing very little in this matter and would be well advised to do a great deal more. The average man of to-day (if there is such a person!) may not be a great reader, but he is acutely 'eye-conscious' and is highly susceptible to influence through advertisement hoardings, the illustrated press, and above all, through what he sees on the screen in the picture house.

This field is at present largely unexplored. But there is, so I believe, a considerable future for the use of the film, both on the large scale and on the small, in Christian teaching and propaganda. As a means, for instance, of teaching the Bible to children and adolescents the possibilities are almost limitless. Experiments in schools have been made here and there, but so far on a small scale.



Moslems leaving the Great Mosque at Delhi. From **BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM** (Missionary Film Committee)

In other countries the proportion is probably as large. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the cinema is one of the factors, and that not the least powerful, which will determine the character of the future civilisations in India and Africa, in China and Japan, and indeed all across the East. There are sinister possibilities here which it is good to know are being watched and possibly in some measure checked, by the League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and by the Permanent Mandates Commission, associated with the League.

That religion is concerned with the cinematograph and its influence goes without saying. Christianity, which makes certain affirmations about God and the nature of man and his place in the world, cannot view with indifference the operation of such an enormously influential factor as the cinema. Especially is it concerned with the cinema as an educational instrument. The Christian Church, in its natural endeavour to shape and influence the general life of the world, must clearly do anything in its power to promote the use of the cinema in the cause of education, using that word in the widest sense.



A Sweet Stall. A scene from **THRO' CHINA AND JAPAN** (Missionary Film Committee)



Another scene from THRO' CHINA AND JAPAN.

Relief work necessitated by Hankow Floods. Refugees are seen waiting their turn in the distribution of wheat.



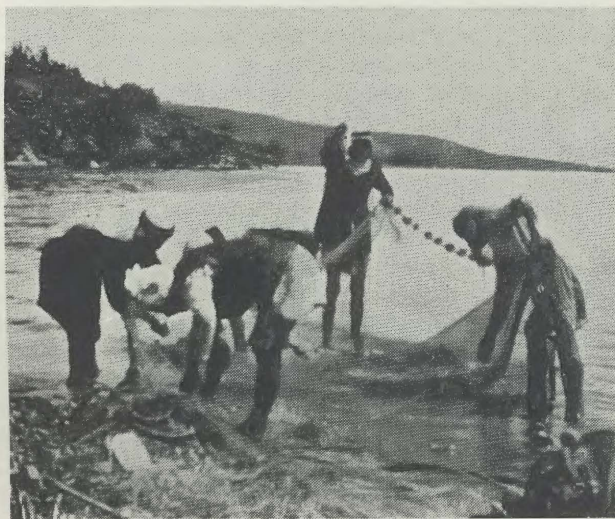
But clearly the film might well be used, not merely for class instruction, but also as a means of setting forth the Christian truth and the Christian Gospel to all manner of people, in halls and even in Churches. I am not by any means urging that the Christian Church should clutch at the religious film as a means of arresting the prevalent decline in Church going. But provided that the films are good and that the circumstances of their showing are characterised by suitability and dignity, the Church has every reason to preach its Gospel by this means and even on occasion to find a place for a religious film in its acts of public worship. There is endless material for such films in the Bible itself—think, for instance, of the use that might be made of our Lord's parables depicted in modern, not archaeological, dress. There is further unlimited material in the stories and biographies of Christian saints and heroes throughout the centuries. And indeed any good story well told, or dramatic situation; whether drawn from history, or freshly conceived and written *ad hoc*, might well drive home the point of the teaching to be given more forcibly than a hundred sermons could ever do.

### Religious Films are Limited

Supposing that it is considered desirable to attempt any enterprise of this kind, the main difficulty at present is that there are very few religious films

available. In saying this I am thinking mainly of the attempt to set forth the Christian Gospel to the mass of the people in this country. It is true that some good work has been done, along a rather more specialised line in the way of presenting to Church people and others the work of Christian missions overseas. The Missionary Film Committee has produced and exhibited some admirable films such as *Through China and Japan*, *Beginning at Jerusalem and Palestine*, and these have been widely shown with satisfactory results. And with regard to the use of the film for ordinary Christian propaganda at home, some interesting and encouraging experiments are being carried out here and there in this land. An interesting account has recently appeared in a special supplement to the *Methodist Times and Leader* of 30th May of the use that is being made of the films in some of the Free Churches, giving details especially of the well-known cinema religious work being done by "Lax of Poplar" and by the Rev. Thomas Tiplady in his Lambeth Mission. And a certain number of Anglican parishes have installed apparatus in Church Hall and Mission Hall and are making good use of films for moral and religious teaching.

A fair, though limited supply of suitable films with sound moral teaching is available such as *Livingstone*, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, *Oberammergau*, *The Holy Land*, and so forth. But, as already indicated, of really religious films in the stricter sense of the word religious, there are so far very few. The Religious Film Society, an association working largely under Free Church auspices, is doing something to supply the need. But the problem of producing and distributing religious films on a considerable scale, such as would serve the purpose sketched in this article, is still largely unsolved. It must be admitted that the making of such films is beset with difficulties, of which expense is not the only formidable consideration. It is possible that the film trade may see here a field to be entered, not to say, exploited; but the highest technical qualifications in the matter of plant and studio and personnel could never atone for lack of an intimate knowledge of the Christian



Fishermen by the Sea of Galilee. From PALESTINE  
(Missionary Film Committee).



religion and a personal acquaintance with its impact on human life. On the other hand, amateurs, even if the initial difficulties of finance could be surmounted, would need to take all possible pains to master the technique of film production; people who are accustomed to seeing first-class finished productions in their Picture Houses on week days will not be impressed on Sundays by religious films which are obviously amateurish. But despite the difficulties, I believe it to be desirable that the production and the scenario work should be kept in the hands of religious people, who would probably require the aid of professional technicians, such as cameramen and scene designers.

#### Care in Choice of Apparatus

Churches or parishes which are proposing to make use of the cinematograph for religious purposes will be well advised to exercise great care in the matter of technical equipment. There is a great deal to be said for the use of silent films, which, of course, give far more latitude for the teaching or preaching which would accompany the film; the drawback

to sound films, from the point of view of the preacher, is that you lose touch with your congregation; and in any case it might be a wise policy to refrain from getting any sound apparatus till there is more standardisation and until there is a machine with more light power than is at present marketed. It is well to consult carefully those with expert knowledge before deciding which of the various available projectors to instal in Church or Hall. Moreover, a good screen with a properly prepared surface, such as silvered aluminium or the beaded surface, is an important and an expensive item.

That there is a great future for religious films is, in my view, hardly open to doubt. There is a clear case here for careful investigation, leading to appropriate action. Indeed, it is understood that a Council, national and interdenominational in its scale, has quite recently been formed under the auspices of some of the highest authorities in the Church of England and the Free Churches. It is imperative that Christian Church in this land and overseas should courageously, wisely and without undue delay, grasp this new and great opportunity.

## POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL OF KINEMATOGRAPHY

THE Annual Exhibition of films made by students of the School of Kinematography at the Regent Street Polytechnic was given on May 22nd. The programme consisted of the following films, all of them 16mm. silent:—

|                  |   |   |                       |
|------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Magyarország     | - | - | (M. V. Hoare)         |
| Pithead Bath     | - | - | (P. J. Davis)         |
| City Waterway    | - | - | (G. C. Rand)          |
| Spring           | - | - | (Sudhys Ghatak)       |
| Water            | - | - | (Alexis Tidmarsh)     |
| Greyhound Racing | - | - | (W. J. Veevers)       |
| Coal             | - | - | (E. Gordan Taylor)    |
| Wheels           | - | - | (Gilbert E. R. Tomes) |
| Sarnia           | - | - | (C. A. Tingley)       |

The best film in the programme was *Wheels*, which showed how wooden wheels are made. Mr. Tomes knew exactly what he wanted to show and had included only what was strictly relevant. The stages from choosing the wood to the fitting of the iron rims were clearly presented and well edited so that the film was both instructive and entertaining. The photography was excellent throughout. As a record of an industry which is dying out the film is of historical importance. Of the other films in the programme *Magyarország* was interesting as an attempt at a documentary in three distinct parts, each contributing to a comprehensive picture of Hungary to-day. *Pithead Bath* contained too much material about mines generally, which tended to obscure the main subject of the film, and *Coal*, while it contained some good material, was scrappy. *Water* was an ambitious attempt to portray the many processes through which water passes before it reaches the consumer, but was too compressed to

be clear. In general, the standard of photography was high, the subjects of the films were important and worthy of treatment as well as providing good film material, but the presentation of the material was too often dull. The directors of the films should be congratulated on the effective way in which they commented to their own films as they were projected and on the musical accompaniments.

W. F.

## TRAINING COLLEGES AND EDUCATIONAL FILMS

The Summer Meeting of the Metropolitan Branch of the Training College Association held at Goldsmiths' College on Friday, May 17th, was devoted to a conference on the use of films for educational purposes. A large and representative meeting witnessed demonstration film lessons with classes of local schoolchildren, given by Miss Fawcett and Mr. Cons, who used the 16mm. silent version and the 16mm. sound version respectively of *Wheatlands of East Anglia* (G.B.I.). The demonstration film lessons were followed by an exhibition of educational films on other subjects in the school curriculum. Mrs. Lowe, the Chairman of the Education Committee of the L.C.C., and Miss Counsell, Principal of Whitelands College, opened the discussion, which centred round the general question of the value of films in schools and the relative value of silent and sound films. Mr. Dean, Warden of Goldsmiths' College, was in the Chair and thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the conference and particularly Mrs. Lowe for her expression of the interest and close consideration which the L.C.C. were giving to the means by which the best use might be made of the educational potentialities of films.



# MUSIC AND THE FILM

By M. D. Calvocoressi

## A PROBLEM OF ADJUSTMENT

THE cutting up of Walton's music for the film *Escape Me Never* in accordance with the producer's requirements has again raised a problem which does not seem to be nearing its solution. It was generally acknowledged that the music had suffered thereby to the same extent as a film would suffer from being arbitrarily cut up in order to be adjusted to music. Yet the producer has every right to ensure what he regards as the suitable pace, while the composer had every right to expect musical continuity and logic to be respected. The problem, therefore, is one of mutual understanding and intelligent co-operation.

At present producers are willing enough to retard the pace of the action for the sake, say, of a song or a cabaret turn. Will a time come when they will do the same for a musical comment, or evocation, or interlude of any kind? And is it advisable that they should, even in films intended for the educated public?

A good deal depends upon how the timing will be done. When the main problem—that of adjustment generally—will be solved the accessory question will solve itself. The *Paris Revue Musicale* for January last was devoted to a symposium of producers, composers and technicians, each dealing with the matter from his own point of view. And there is much to be learned from what they have to say.

### The Coming of Sound

According to Lionel Landry a great mistake was committed at the very start. When the sound film was invented,

The function of music in relation to the film has been a subject of considerable controversy. Mr. M. D. Calvocoressi, the well-known music critic, here suggests that the solution to the problem lies in mutual understanding and intelligent co-operation between composer and film producer.

people were all too prone to believe that the new means thus created meant the birth of a new form of art—mindless of the fact that the public remained the same as before and could

not be expected to change its outlook and habits of thought all of a sudden. Another mistake—a common one in all arts—was to regard the new means as ends in themselves; this led to wastefulness and misuse.

The true function of music, Landry continues, is the same in the sound films as in opera and ballets or in any form of stage music, but with the additional difficulties inseparable from the association of music with spoken dialogue. In films such as *Liebelei*, *The Unfinished Symphony* and *Maskerade*, this last problem has been skilfully solved. Further progress will become possible, according to Dimitri Kirsanof, as soon as producers will know more about music and so be able to co-operate more closely with composers. If ever an Academy for film producers (a much needed institution) is founded, it should certainly include special music classes organised on a suitable basis. Meanwhile collaborators would be spared many difficulties if only in the planning as much care was given to deciding



Elizabeth Bergner in a scene from *ESCAPE ME NEVER*, directed by Paul Czinner. Walton's music for the film was cut in accordance with producer's requirements. (United Artists)



the part to be played by the music as is given to determining the placing of the camera, the lighting, and other technical details.

Jacques Ibert calls attention to the fact that in *The Unfinished Symphony* and the *Drei Groschen Oper* the producer based his work on music already in existence and succeeded in achieving the suitable atmosphere and pace in spite of the attendant difficulties; whereas when a composer is commissioned to write music for a film, it is always he who is expected to do all the adjusting or to suffer it to be done for him.

Yet Arthur Hoérée points out even under the difficulties of the experimental period, certain composers brilliantly succeeded in the task of writing scores for films. Henri Rabaud with *Le Miracle des Loups* and *Le Joueur d'Echecs*, Florent Schmitt with *Salammbô*, Arthur Honegger with *Napoleon*; Delannoy and Brillouin with *Rapsodie Hongroise*. But long after the problem of synchronisation had been thoroughly solved, the aesthetic problem remained formidable.

#### An Aesthetic Problem

It is in all respects the problem with which composers of operas and lyric dramas, from Monteverdi to the present time, have grappled in vain. Speech can achieve its dramatic or psychological purpose in a few seconds, music within the same short time very little indeed. When a composer strives to illustrate every moment of a film, his music almost invariably becomes jerky and scrappy if the pace is not to be inordinately retarded. He might rather choose to illustrate by constructed and otherwise

adequate music the essential moments in the film, connecting these by transitions whenever the dialogue itself does not suffice to provide the requisite link. Or a compromise—not an easy one to achieve—is possible, films and music running parallel, each with a measure of independence the central points of each episode providing the rallying points. Music will thus be able to maintain its own continuity while keeping in close enough contact with the film. This independence in co-operation is, Hoérée remarks, the very secret of Mozart's methods in opera.

As regards the possibility of resorting, at times, to music alone, Jacques Brillouin has very relevant remarks to offer. Books, he says, are divided into chapters, plays into acts and scenes. Nothing of the sort occurs in films, whose continuity (often achieved at the cost of overburdening the action with irrelevant particulars) seems a survival from the time when the cinema was in its nonage and the art of transitions, ellipses, and short cuts, was not yet part of its technique. When producers will have learned to divide films into suitable acts or chapters, music will come to its own during the intervals and prove all the more effective if elsewhere it is not used to excess for mere purposes of filling in.

To sum up: the practical difficulties, thanks to technical progress, have ceased to constitute obstacles. Another article by Arthur Hoérée, "How to Work on a Sound Film," shows that composers who take the needful trouble can easily learn to adjust themselves to the requirements of the film. It is doubtful whether many producers have devoted an equivalent amount of labour to learning to adjust their technique at least to the minimum requirements of music.

## FILM IDEALS OF PRESENT DAY GERMANY

"The film must free itself from the vulgar mediocrity of a mob amusement, but in doing so it must not lose its strong inner connection with the people."

"THERE is a series of basic principles, applicable to the film both in its national and its international significance which I regard, subject to no compromise, as a firm foundation upon which the film has to prove its artistic power."

Speaking at the closing session of the International Film Congress at Berlin, Dr. Goebbels proceeded to enumerate these laws.

"The film," he said, "like every other form of art, has its own laws. It is only by obeying these laws that it will be able to preserve its true character. These laws are not derived from the stage. The film must break away from stage tradition and stand on its own feet. Stage and film each speaks its own language. What is still tolerable in the dim light of stage scenery is completely unmasked in the glaring light of the Jupiter lamps.

"The film must free itself from the vulgar mediocrity of a mob amusement, but in doing so it must not lose its strong inner connection with the people.

"This does not mean that it is the function of the film to serve the purposes of a colourless aestheticism. On the contrary, it is just because of its unprecedentedly far-reaching range that it, more than all other forms of art, must be popular art in the best sense of the word. But popular art must present in artistic form the joys and sorrows that affect the great masses. Hence the film must not stand aloof from the hard realities of the day, nor lose itself in a dreamland only existing in the imaginations of unpractical producers and scenario writers living in a non-existing world.

"There is no art that is self-supporting; material sacrifices made in the services of art bring a return





Entrance to the Reichstag Council Chamber at Kroll's, where the International Film Congress, Berlin, 1935, held its sessions.

in ideal values. For every government it is a matter of course to finance great State buildings in which the architectural creative will of a period is immortalised in stone; it is a matter of course to subsidise theatres in which the tragic and comic passions of this period are represented; it is a matter of course to establish galleries in which the pictorial, cultural possessions of a people are housed. It must be just as much a matter of course for every government to secure the artistic existence of the film by material sacrifices, unless it gives up all idea of treating the film as art or of giving it a position as such.

"The film must keep in touch with the spirit of its age in order to appeal to its age. Although the subjects treated may be drawn from other countries and distant historical epochs, its problems must be adapted to the spirit of the period, in order to be able to address the spirit of the period.

"The film, developed on these rules, will not

its own inherent honesty and naturalness. Empty pathos is just as alien to it as the trashy theatre tricks with which it was heavily burdened by its stepmother, the stage, on its life's road, but which merely represent irksome baggage that does not belong to it. The honest and natural film which gives animated and plastic expression to our period can become a valuable means for the building up of a better, purer and more realistic world of artistic possibilities.

"If these fundamental principles are observed in the film, it will conquer the world as a new artistic manifestation. It will then be the strongest pioneer and the most modern spokesman of our age."



A scene from *DAS MADCHEN JOHANNA* the Ufa film shown for the first time to the members of the International Congress. The film was directed by Ucicky, and Angella Saloker plays in the title role.



# THE COMING OF A NEW GULLIVER

By A. Ptushko

Ptushko, the Soviet Author-Director sets his modern Gulliver in a new Lilliput with dolls as principal characters. He here describes the art which gives life to these little people of metal, wood and cloth.

**M**ANY people are to-day still of the opinion that multiplication films with doll heroes are spectacles only for young children.

This prejudice found favourable ground because nobody was seriously interested in subjects for them—not even the producers of such films. Producers and artists devoted their attention to the problem of animating an immobile doll, imitating the grotesque actions of their astonishing picture brother “Mickey Mouse”; they temporarily forgot the main thing—the doll as an actor with its special powers of expression. They forgot that dolls possess theatrical appeal and power to influence the emotions of spectators of any age. They forgot that dolls have a mysterious charm that has made the doll theatre a favourite mass entertainment through many ages.

## Art of Object Multiplication

The masks of heroes in the doll theatre were immobile, however. They were, so to speak, neutral regarding their inner emotions. Then there came to the assistance of the doll theatre the art of multiplication with its powerful technique.

Like a prince in a fairy-tale the cinema put an end to the facial petrification of the doll heroes. The art of object multiplication gave dolls the opportunity to acquire all the shades of expression possible to the artist's palette. After a few years of persistent work by a Collective of Soviet artists, our dolls learned to speak easily and expressively, to sing of love and joy, to express anger, grief and other emotions called for by the scenario.

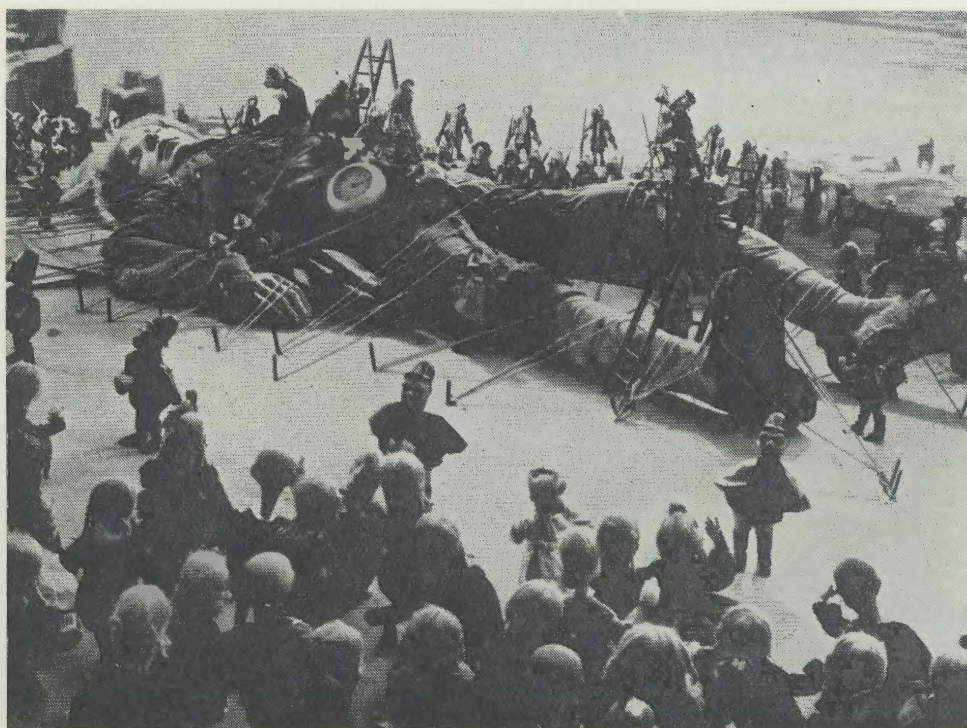
In all film productions the use of distance and the skill of the artist are very important, but they are not the only factors that determine the success of a picture. The influence of these factors is, however, decisive in object multiplication, where the artist and author and director physically create the scenario heroes.

Multiplication, recognising the importance of painting and architecture, also uses sculpture which, through cinema technique, becomes dynamic. The possibilities of object multiplication in the fields of the grotesque, fantasy and satire are limitless.

The most popular fairy tales, the wildest satire may be realised by object multiplication.

The cinema artist achieves still greater results by combining the work of dolls and living men. This combination of two seemingly incompatible elements produces a novel and interesting effect. Our Collective began its first experiments in this direction

with the production of short films that were merry and adventurous. The leading character of these films was a little fellow, “Bratishkin,” 20 centimetres high, who bravely encountered all kinds of troubles with full grown people. Natural scenes were used for the settings.



Gulliver washed ashore is bound “for safety's sake.” A scene from THE NEW GULLIVER, by Ptushko (Reproduced by courtesy of Central Feature Services)



### The New Gulliver

Desiring to widen the scope of multiplication and to find new forms for this remarkable art, we recalled the classical story of *The Adventures of Gulliver in the Land of Lilliput*, by Jonathan Swift. With this story as a basis we decided to develop a new play with entirely different characters. Thus the film *The New Gulliver* was conceived.



Three of the doll characters from Ptushko's film *THE NEW GULLIVER*



G. Roshal and myself, authors of the scenario, borrowing from Swift the external framework and a few well-known episodes from the adventures of Gulliver, set ourselves the task of filming the adventures of a Soviet Pioneer, Petya, in the fairyland of modernised Lilliput.

The action begins with a colourful feast at the pioneer camp "Artec," on a picturesque seashore. The boys have made a yacht from an old wrecked boat. For this work Petya is rewarded with the gift of his favourite book *Gulliver's Travels*, by Swift. The boys go in their yacht to a wild, rocky, isolated island where they begin reading the book aloud. During the reading Petya falls asleep.

Being under the influence of the events of the day, his surroundings and the reading, Petya dreams. In this dream, after some adventures on a pirate brig ending in the traditional shipwreck, Petya finds himself in the fairyland of the Lilliputians. But this is not the Lilliput land of Swift. Petya looks at everything with modern eyes. His Lilliput has all the characteristics of to-day, grotesquely exaggerated. Petya's experience of everyday life is consequently woven into familiar objects of modern life, combined with scenes from the Middle

Ages. And although all the characters are dressed in 17th century costume, we recognise in them the heroes of the present day political arena.

Petya, found on the shore by the Lilliputians, is put to sleep as a precaution, bound and taken to the capital of Lilliput on a special platform drawn by hundreds of tractors. On the square by the King's palace the Lilliputians try to wake the boy by shooting off cannons, but are unsuccessful. The King, on horseback, climbs upon Petya's chest and tickles his nose with a spear. Petya's response, a thunderlike sneeze, almost leads to an all-Lilliputian catastrophe. King and horse are blown aside. Ladies of the Court, in crinolines, fly high into the air like parachutes. Thus start the adventures of our New Gulliver.

After a gorgeous parade of the King's army, between the legs of the bewildered Petya, the Lilliputians prepare an excellent banquet in his honour to make him more jolly. The court jazz band plays with great gusto and the Master of Ceremonies sings a modern fox-trot parody. Food is served to Petya's table by a



From top to bottom :  
The Abbot,  
The Financier,  
The Dandy.

conveyor system. Dancing girls try in vain to entertain Petya. Little people, microputs, who are the size of the little fingers of the Lilliputians, are among the entertainers.

The satiric sting of Swift's masterly story is made to touch contemporary life ; to emphasise this fact we have introduced a few scenes in the Parliament of Lilliput where a throne speech is delivered by a machine hidden in the mantle of His Majesty, who does not speak.



Then follows the heroic part of the film. Deep down under the ground in tremendous mechanised factories we find the workers of Lilliput. The workers revolt. Petya hearing of this uprising comes to their assistance. At the decisive moment in the fight between the workers and the King's army, Petya takes the Navy far out to the open sea and . . . awakes, amid the roar of his comrades' laughter, on the island where he fell asleep. The film ends with a rousing pioneer song.

#### How it is Done

The most interesting fact in the construction of this film is that all the main parts are played by artists the size of a human palm. These little men are made of rubber, metal, wood and cloth. All their joints are mobile and they make flexible and graceful movements. People who have seen these little men on the screen say they move exactly like living people. Their faces express human emotions—anger and elation, joy and suspicion, cowardice and heroic courage.

There are in New Lilliput the happy and the unhappy, the rich and the poor. These people are so different that, for their presentation, we used absolutely different kinds of dolls. The King and his Court are represented by cartoons, that, in the hands of the artist, Sarah Mokil, speak the language of satire. The workers are sculptured figures (by S. Olga Tazhnaya) moulded on natural and sympathetic lines. The dolls have no hidden mechanism; they are without springs or motors. Their arms and legs are not attached to strings as are those of marionettes. The dolls themselves are immobile, but look at the screen and you will see that they are alive.

How is this accomplished? What miracle gave life to those little creatures of wood and cloth? The miracle is performed by object multiplication.

The essence of multiplication is that the artists make picture after picture, shot after shot, showing the continuously changing positions and phases of movements of an object. In the film the separate actions are combined into continuous movement. Twenty-five shots are needed to make a doll lift its hands. Imagine the work done by our actor, F. Krasny, in portraying the scene in the square of the capital crowded with Lilliputians, everyone of whom was moving and staring at Gulliver and expressing his individual Lilliput emotion. Naturally to do all this work alone was physically impossible for one man. A group of assistants worked on the

studio stage on separate sections of the scene. The filming was particularly difficult where the dolls and human actors appear together. The operators, Nicholas Renkov and Igor Shkarenkov, were compelled to use all the resources of trick filming.

#### Difficulties Met and Overcome

Work on *The New Gulliver* purposely was not directed along lines of least resistance. We were not afraid of difficult problems if they yielded new artistic effects. Our greatest accomplishment was the achievement of the harmony between all the parts of this completely experimental film, i.e., between subject and content, between the acting of the dolls and of a living hero, between artificial settings and real nature.

Our composer, Leo Schwartz, was compelled to do a great deal of experimenting in the instrumentation of the Lilliputians' orchestra.

Bolotin, the writer who completed the entire scenario, was forced to take into consideration the special characteristics of Lilliputian speech. We encountered the greatest difficulty, however, when we began recording the Lilliput music and speech. The high voices of women and children, the mouth instruments usually used by marionette operators and the voices of dwarfs would not give the necessary effect. We wanted to find sounds that would convince the audience that they really came from the small moving creatures on the screen. We accomplished this through the skill of our recorder, Alexis Korobov, who developed the idea of transforming sounds. We were able to make Lilliput speech and music sound one-and-a-half times higher than normal.

Sixty settings and 3,000 dolls were required for producing this picture. The main doll characters such as the King, Prime Minister and Chief of Police, had from two to three hundred interchangeable heads with various facial expressions.

We believe that *The New Gulliver* in the number of dolls used, in its length compared with other films of this type, in the richness of the mimetic expressions of its heroes and in new methods of sound recording is unique in film history.



The Parliamentary Deputy



A Policeman in the GULLIVER film



# THE TALKIE WITNESS

By H. Bruce Woolfe, Director, G.B. Instructional, Ltd.

**A** CASE was recently tried in the Law Courts which concerned the validity of a patent used in recording sound on film. It was felt that many points that would be difficult to make clear to a non-technical Judge could be much better explained by moving pictures. It was therefore decided that a film record should be made detailing the making of a sound record and showing the complete British Acoustic Recording system.

The film was made and in due course was exhibited to the Judge at the hearing of the action. Eventually the British Acoustic Co. won their case; whether the film was a potent factor or not in the result, one cannot say, but the fact remains. It is not often that films figure as "witnesses" in legal actions, but the usefulness of this particular subject seems to point to the advisability of an extended use of the cinema in this direction, especially where intricate processes are involved which can be explained far better by means of the cinema to the untechnical mind than by the most expert lawyer.

## Photographing How Sound is Recorded

In this particular picture, which was entitled *The Principles of Sound Recording*, it was decided to do away with diagrammatic representations and to rely entirely on the "straight take." If one considers for a moment it will be easily realised that to undertake to photograph sound being actually recorded on the film was by no means an easy task. Actually, in the sound camera, the light which impinges onto the film leaves no mark visible to the eye, or the camera, until it is developed, when the markings made by the varying light beam turn black. A means had to be adopted, therefore, of developing the film as it was exposed. Mr. Frank Goodliffe, of Science Films, Ltd., was entrusted with the task of photographing this intricate subject and cleverly devised a means of photographing the sound track in such a way that as the oscillating mirror flashed the beams of light onto the moving film so the markings appeared and were photographed.

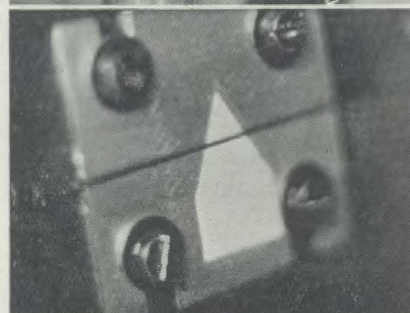
## How it was Done

Actually, the film was passed through a developer before it reached the light beam, so that immediately the film was exposed the markings appeared. This sounds quite simple; in reality it was not quite so easy. A little reflection will show that light had to be used to photograph the mechanism and the film passing through it. Ordinary light would have been quite sufficient to fog the whole of the

The Oscillograph. In the centre is a black circle in the middle of which is a tiny white rectangle. This is the mirror which is moved by the electric vibrations received from the microphone.

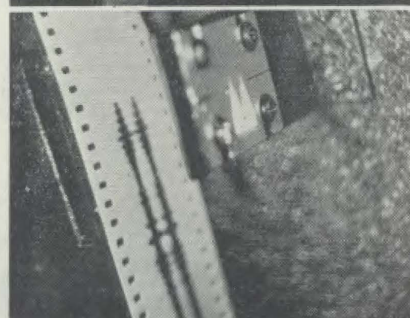


The pyramid of light in the centre of the picture moves up and down across the slit as directed by the mirror in the oscillograph, recording a single track.



The double track as recorded on the film by the weak or stronger vibrations of the light. In the negative the record is black.

N.B.—In order to show the process better the photographed sound track is moved to the middle of the film and considerably enlarged.



The sound track in its correct position at the side of the picture. This picture is positive; the record is white and indicates loud notes.



The white sound track records very low notes.





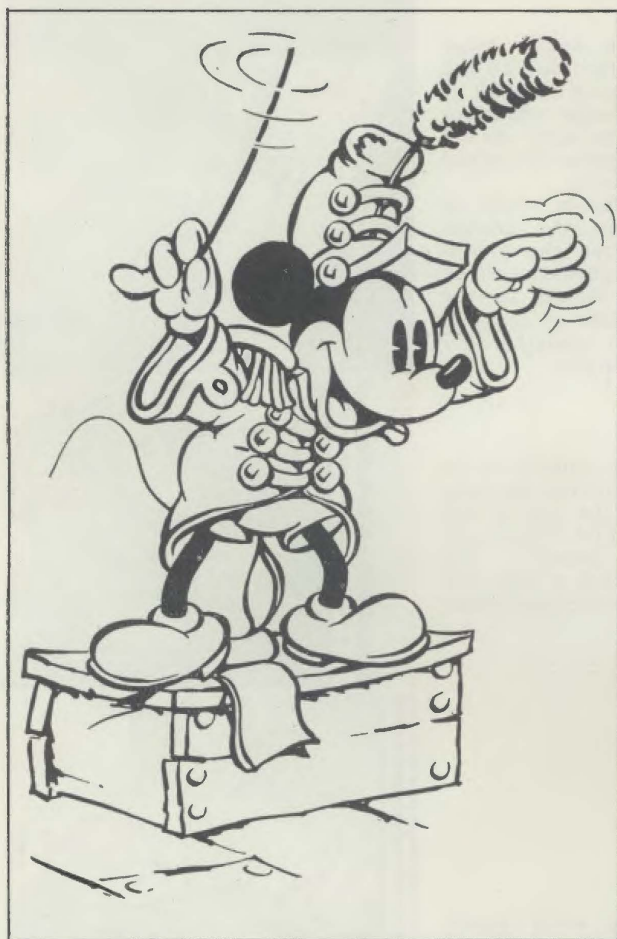
film being photographed and it was necessary to find a film with a very slow emulsion that would not become fogged while being exposed in a subdued light. Another film with a very fast emulsion was necessary that was capable of photographing the whole moving mechanism clearly enough to be seen on the screen. Fortunately, Messrs. Kodak came to the rescue and provided the film stock with the requisite emulsions. It was found in practice that to avoid fogging the film that was being photographed so little light had to be used that a time exposure was necessary. This in turn entailed the stop motion process of one picture one turn, and in order to secure regularity of exposure a motor with special devices had to be fitted to the camera. In addition to this, the light had to be arranged in such a way that it only glowed while the exposure was being made; this was in order to reduce the chance of fogging the film which was being photographed. All these factors had to be scientifically worked out in order that the pictures taken individually should weld together and give an absolutely correct impression when projected in the ordinary way. When completed, the picture was submitted to the British Acoustic sound experts who passed it as being a correct interpretation of what happened inside the sound camera during the recording of a

sound film, with two exceptions which were necessary in order to show clearly the process. One was in connection with the oscillating mirror which moves by the vibrations transmitted to it by the current from the microphone. The real mirror is so tiny in relation to the size of the mechanism in which it operates that in order clearly to show the movements of the whole apparatus a larger mirror had to be adopted. A similar reason made it necessary to show the sound track larger than it really is. It is shown in the picture not in the correct recording position close to the sprocket holes, but in the centre of the film. These were the only two variations made.

#### How Talkies Talk

A popular version of this film has been prepared under the title *How Talkies Talk*, which can be hired from G.B. Equipments, Ltd.

The production and use of this film was an interesting experiment which was quite successful and which will doubtless be followed by others. Now that portable projectors can be relied on to give good projection and standard films can be successfully reduced to 16mm., an interesting field is opened up, and we shall probably hear a good deal more of the "talkie witness."



Mickey Mouse as the conductor in the coloured cartoon  
THE BAND CONCERT (United Artists)

## WALT DISNEY AND MICKEY MOUSE

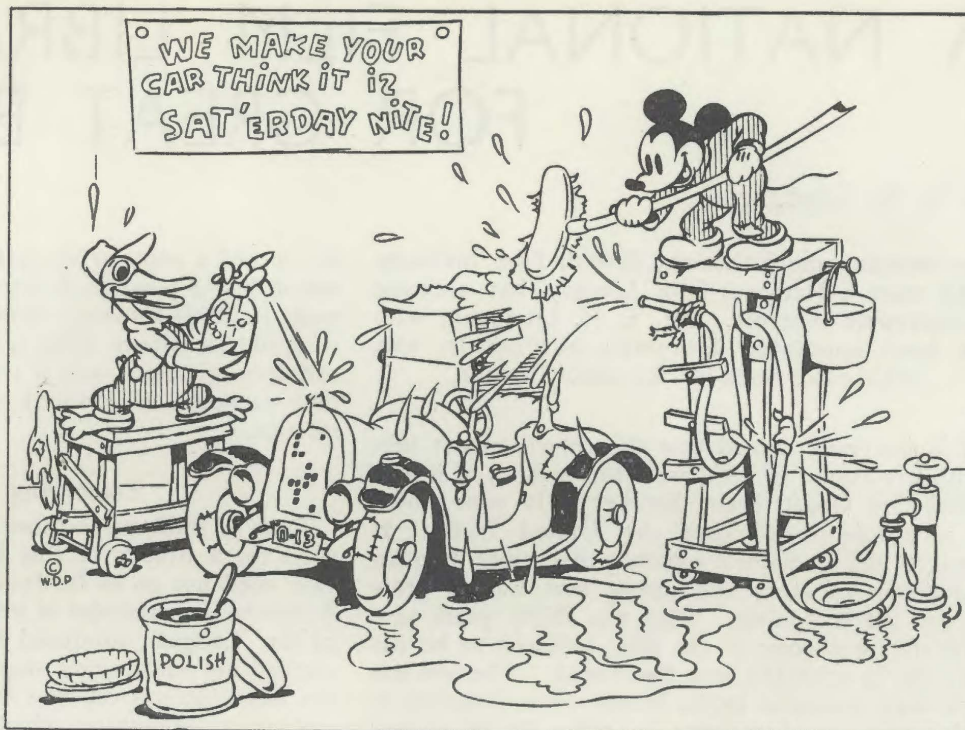
WALT DISNEY, who created Mickey Mouse, protested when he was recently in London that he did not know how the idea came to him. The trick of animating cartoons was not his invention. Disney had made his share of the cartoons, with no outstanding distinction, when in 1928 the motion picture industry was almost completely demoralised by the sudden introduction of sound and dialogue. Early in 1928 Disney conceived the notion of having a mouse as a character and in the late Spring came the idea which was to bring success. He decided to synchronise Mickey's actions with music.

Music therefore plays an all-important part in the production of the Mickey Mouse cartoons and Silly Symphonies. Indeed, from a standpoint of interpreting the music with actual movement, these cartoons are some of the most perfect things made. They are the result of the united efforts of cartoonist and musician. First the rough plot is worked out at a story conference at which some twenty-five or thirty of the Disney staff are present. Usually, but not always, Disney has the first germ of the idea which is to carry Mickey through another adventure. Then the humorist "gag-men" add the novel touches.

The musical score is created after the story has been finished, but prior to the drawing of any detailed pictures.



MICKEY'S SERVICE  
STATION (United Artists)



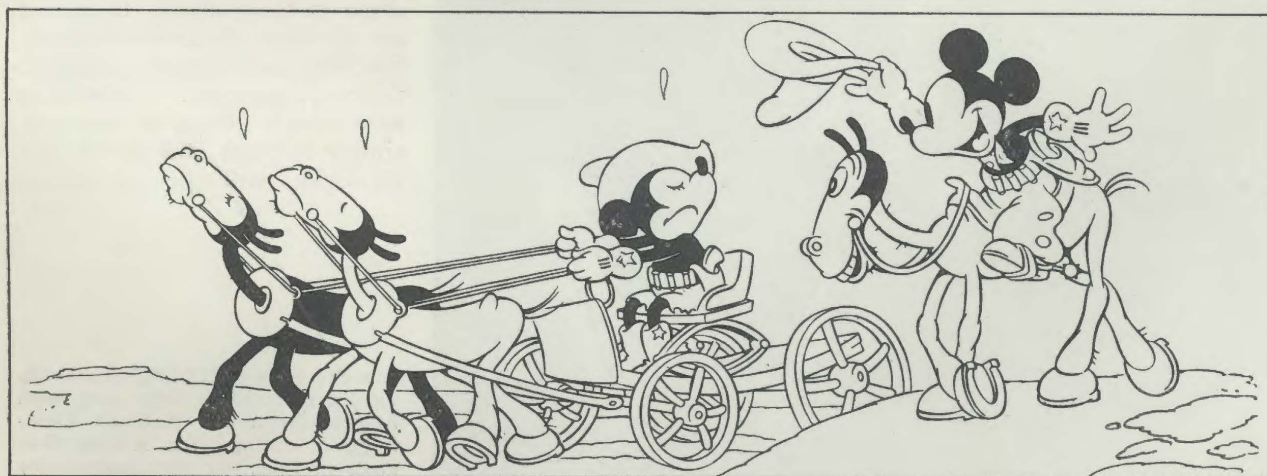
A chief lay-out man, roughly similar to a director in a more conventional motion picture studio, then takes the musical score and carefully works out the number of movements in each episode. Perfect synchronization is secured by mathematical means. Every frame of film has to account both for a certain action and also for music to accompany that action. Thus Mickey's rhythm is the only perfect one, since it is mechanical. The chief layout man compiles a list of drawings, normally about 9,000, and these are made by hand and photographed one at a time. Even the men in the studio who draw the cartoons are chosen mainly for their sense of rhythm and accuracy.

While the drawings are being made and photographed, the second division of the work is under way; the recording of the music and the sound effects. The sound-proof room, where the sound is recorded, is the most weird of all the sub-divisions of the Disney studio. It is a large hall, rather similar in appearance to the average broadcasting studio. A small orchestra is seated in the left-hand

corner as you enter. At the opposite end is a glass-enclosed control room from which the orchestra is conducted. Stretching almost the length of the room, at the right, is a long table with an assortment of instruments and four or five men standing in front of it. A microphone is in front of each of them. These are the sound experts and they can simulate any desired noise.

When the work of the Disney studio is completed the photographed pictures are on one film and the sound track on another. Merging them is a simple operation. From the negative the prints are made, and another Mickey Mouse or Silly Symphony is ready for an eager public.

Disney's idea that sound was not only to be added, but that Mickey's movements were to be synchronised to music, certainly complicated the whole process enormously, but Mickey's tremendous world-wide success proves that it is all worthwhile.



TWO GUN MICKEY

(United Artists)



# A NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY FOR GREAT BRITAIN

By E. H. Lindgren

The announcement that the British Film Institute is to start a National Film Library has aroused considerable interest. Mr. E. H. Lindgren, who has been appointed Librarian, outlines in this article the need for its establishment.

It is generally agreed that the entertainment film industry began in 1903 with the making of a film called *The Great Train Robbery*. It was shown in nickelodeons all over the United States. It changed the inventor's curiosity overnight into an instrument of story and drama that was to grow beyond all reckoning. That was thirty years ago. Last month a copy of the film, believed to be the only one in existence, was discovered. The film has now been entrusted to the British Film Institute in order that measures may be taken for its proper preservation.

The incident has served to call attention once again to the need for a National Film Library which can undertake the preservation of films of national and historical value in an organised manner. As readers of *SIGHT AND SOUND* will have seen by the time this article appears, through announcements in the press and elsewhere, a film library of this kind is at last to be set up under the auspices of the British Film Institute. None of the tasks indicated in the Institute's terms of reference was more emphasised than this one. "The Film Institute," it was declared, "would maintain a library with multiple functions. Within the limits of what is technically and financially possible, it would preserve

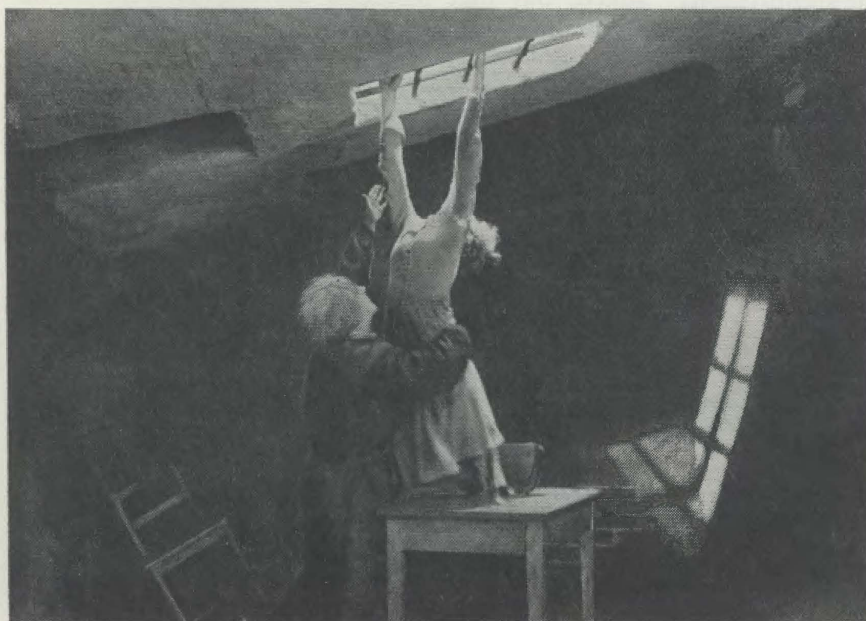
for record a copy of every film printed in England which had a possible documentary value; it would make available for study films of interest to students; it would distribute films not available through the ordinary agencies; and it would maintain an up-to-date catalogue of films of cultural and educational interest."

## Preserving Classics of the Screen

Even in 1932, when these words were written, the need for a library of this kind was long overdue. One need not go so far back as *The Great Train Robbery* for examples of lost films. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, produced by Dr. Robert Wiene, marked an outstanding step in the development of the film. It was the first break from photographic realism to something which was both imaginative and creative. "In ten years," writes Paul Rotha, "this film has risen to the greatest heights, as fresh now as when first produced, a masterpiece of dramatic form and content." To-day, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* is unobtainable in this country. The same is true of Fritz Lang's *Destiny*; of *The Covered Wagon*, one of the few films of epic quality which America has given us, produced in 1923; of *Flesh and the Devil*; of any of the full-length Chaplin films; of the French film *Michael Strogoff*; of *Metropolis*, *Vaudeville*, *The Last Laugh*, or, indeed, of many others which one could easily name at random. It is inevitable that films will disappear if their preservation is left only to the vagaries of chance.

## Historical Record

Films, moreover, constitute a new and valuable kind of historical document. They stand alone in their ability to record for all time all kinds of action, from the most epoch-making to the most personal. To let these new records go out of existence, simply through lack of effective foresight, will be an action



A scene from *METROPOLIS*, an Ufa picture directed by Fritz Lang, with Brigitte Helm and Rudolph Klein-Rogge in leading parts. A silent film, made in 1926, and now unobtainable in this country.



for which posterity will hardly have cause to thank us. Great Britain, in particular, has an unrivalled opportunity for making and preserving film records of the daily life and ceremonial customs of the primitive and orientally-civilised peoples within her Empire. It is a responsibility which should be discharged before the disappearance of the life itself ultimately makes it impossible. One of the main purposes of the National Film Library being set up by the British Film Institute will be to preserve films of this kind.

Permanent preservation is in itself a highly technical matter and in this the Film Institute has had the co-operation of the British Kinematograph

time educational films can be obtained from some score of principal sources and a host of smaller ones. Teachers, however, are busy people. If they are compelled to search a mass of catalogues, all classified differently, some badly and some not at all and to negotiate with several different firms for a single programme, it is clear that the great majority will be discouraged from using films altogether. The Film Institute, through its various panels and committees, is attacking the problem of educational film production; but this is not enough. Effective production is useless without effective distribution. As soon as teachers can obtain films easily they will use them, and projectors too. The

## NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY APPEAL

AS a first step towards the formation of a National Film Library the Governors of the British Film Institute are appealing for gifts of films to the Library. Such films may fall into any of the following classes:

- Old films of historical value
- Amateur films
- Travel films
- Educational films
- Films produced for purposes of scientific research
- News-reels
- Documentaries
- Films likely to be of future historical interest
- Publicity films produced by public bodies
- Publicity films produced by private bodies
- Films made for propaganda societies
- Religious films
- Medical films
- Foreign films

They may be submitted for one of two purposes:

- (a) for permanent preservation
- (b) for educational distribution

Films accepted for preservation will be kept as far as is technically and financially possible under the conditions set out in the British Kinematograph Society's report on preservation. Films accepted for distribution will be available for loan to schools and to other approved institutions and to members of the British Film Institute.

Many people who are not in a position to give films will nevertheless desire to help forward the work of the National Film Library. The Governors of the Film Institute have therefore decided to raise a fund to meet the considerable expenditure which will be involved in purchasing projectors and other equipment and in generally maintaining and developing the Library. The first twenty-five persons to give donations of £100 each will be known as FOUNDER MEMBERS: already certain public spirited people have come forward in this capacity. Beyond this other contributions, large or small, are earnestly invited and will be gratefully acknowledged. Excluding FOUNDER MEMBERS, anyone making a donation of any kind to the fund will be known as a FRIEND OF THE NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY. The names of all who assist the Library in any way, either as Founders or Friends, or by gifts of films, will be periodically published. All gifts or communications should be addressed to:

His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, K.T.,  
Film Library Appeal,  
The British Film Institute,  
4, Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

Society, which has set out in detail the conditions under which a film should be stored if it is to be kept for any length of time. One of these conditions, incidentally, is that no such film shall be used for projection. This means that if a film exists only in the vaults of the National Film Library it will be necessary to make a second copy before the film can be shown.

### Distributing Films to Schools

The Library will also distribute films to schools, clubs, discussion groups and other bodies using the film for educational purposes. The need for effective distribution of these films is no less vital than the need for a film repository. At the present

only real solution is a central agency for the supply of educational films, which at the same time, by reason of its authoritative and independent status, would be able to give advice of all kinds on the use of films and issue a single catalogue in which films are accurately classified and graded as to quality. The importance of localised distribution has often been emphasised. Schools, it is argued, will want to use films in their own libraries, or in libraries maintained by the local authorities. The way to organised decentralisation of this kind, however, lies through centralisation as a first step. It is hoped that ultimately the National Film Library may stand at the head of a nation-wide system of local and specialist branches, doing much the same sort





Scenes from some old entertainment films. *Above: from left to right: VAUDEVILLE, an Ufa film directed by E. A. Dupont, with Emil Jannings, Lya de Putti and Warwick Ward. Gustav Fröhlich in METROPOLIS. Below: from left to right: THE LOVES OF JEANNE NEY, with Brigitte Helm, Fritz Rasp and Edith Jehanne, directed by Pabst. THE BLUE ANGEL, in which Emil Jannings starred with Marlene Dietrich, directed by Sternberg. (The scenes from the last two films are reproduced by courtesy of the Forum Cinema)*

of service as the National Central Library does for books. It will not be competitive with existing libraries, all of which are specialised to a greater or lesser degree. It will co-ordinate and amplify their work. France has already shown the way. Starting experimentally in 1920, when it lent 54 films to educational institutions, the Musée Pédagogique distributed in 1928-9 no fewer than 43,500 films and was operating through 47 affiliated centres throughout the country. Whereas in England there are possibly some 700 schools with projectors, in France there are 18,000. The difference between these figures is, from many points of view, of the greatest significance.

### The Institute's Appeal

These, very briefly, are some of the reasons why a National Film Library is so urgently required. The Film Institute has prepared a very extensive and detailed scheme for a fully equipped library, consisting of repository, reference section and distributing section. This larger scheme will serve as the model to be ultimately worked for; anything so far reaching in its scope must necessarily be attained by progressive stages.

At the moment there are a large number of films in existence, amateur, industrial, scientific, publicity films of both public and private bodies and the like, which it would seem reasonable to collect and distribute from one source for educational purposes at a nominal charge simply to cover distribution costs. There are also a large number of films of considerable value lying idle in the possession of private owners and in the bins of junk merchants, entertainment and documentary films, scientific records and newsreels whose commercial value is exhausted, the owners of which would be willing to give them to a trustworthy organisation for permanent preservation. It is for films such as these that the Institute is now appealing. Beyond this, money will be required for the purchase of projectors, for the renewal of copies and for general maintenance and development. For those who are not in a position to give films, therefore, but who would like to assist the Library, the Governors are inviting donations as well. Both for the first stages of the work and for its ultimate completion, the Governors of the British Film Institute must rely on the generous co-operation of public-spirited men and women and this they are convinced the national value of their task will bring forth.



# PRESERVING ENTERTAINMENT FILMS

An Interview with Mr. Woods, the Manager of the Forum Cinema

The Forum Cinema, Villiers Street, London, W.C.2., has become noted for its policy of reviving the best films of the past.

"Anyone who runs a repertory cinema," Mr. Woods told me, "comes up against this problem of well-known films of the past which are no longer obtainable, either because no copies of them remain in the country, or else because the copies that do exist are so badly worn that they can't be projected."

"Does your experience," I asked him, "indicate that the public would welcome some means of preserving these films?"

Mr. Woods's affirmative was an emphatic one. "People have come not only from the suburbs but from the provinces, too, to see some of our revivals."

"What kind of films, in your opinion, ought to be preserved?"

"Well, in the first place, there should be no national restrictions. The film masterpieces of all countries should be preserved, irrespective of national origin. The greatness of all art depends on qualities that are international and non-political, and that applies as much to the film as to other forms of art. The film is just as much an art as painting or literature, and its best work should be perpetuated by the nation in the same way. As for the films themselves, I suppose a good film, or what we in the film trade talk of as a "classic," can be roughly defined as any film having cultural value because of its direction, or theme or photography. This applies to documentary and interest films, of course, as well as entertainment or fictional films. It is the old films which show how much these things count for. There are films produced ten years ago or more which are as effective in their appeal to-day as they were then; and there are films being produced to-day which will be out of date in twelve months."

"Are there any other factors, apart from the wear and tear on copies, which cause films of the kind you have mentioned to disappear?"

"Oh, yes. Repertory films only interest a minority public, and even though it is growing, it will probably always be a minority. It's only natural that a new film will always have the greatest current interest. A film comes over here in the first place because a renter has acquired the distribution rights for this country for a certain period. The trouble is that as soon as this period is over and the film has had its run, he doesn't think it worth his while to renew the rights, and so the copies either have to be destroyed or sent back to their own country. Possibly copies may still be kept there in the vaults of the original distributors: in fact, I'm sure that a number are. But it is difficult to persuade them to search them out, because, of course, their whole concern is with new

films, which are far more profitable. I'm sure that the very fact that a National Film Library deems a film worthy of perpetuation, will give it a definite value in the eyes of distributors, and encourage them to maintain good copies in circulation, at least for longer periods than they do at present. The fact that at least one copy of a film exists in the country, in a centre of this kind, will facilitate and stimulate its revival. It is a great pity that films which have made screen history should be allowed to fade out of existence, and that is why I am so glad to hear that the British Film Institute is at last acting in the matter. Something of this kind has been wanted for a very long time, and its scheme for a Film Library deserves the fullest possible support from everyone who is interested in the revival of these old masterpieces and in the preservation of new films of cultural and artistic value."

E.H.L.



Above: Conrad Veidt as Ivan the Terrible in *WAXWORKS*, a German film of 1924, recently revived. Below: A scene from *THE LAST PERFORMANCE* with Conrad Veidt and Mary Philbin, now unobtainable in this country.

(Reproduced by courtesy of the Forum Cinema).





Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll in *THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS*, directed by Hitchcock (G.B.D.)

## FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By Alistair Cooke

BY setting a low standard for the movies, a good many people confess that they are able to enjoy them and rid themselves, at the same time, of any intellectual misgivings. One is reminded of poor C. E. Montague in the trenches anxiously pulling out his Virgil to convince himself he was still alive. Recently Mr. St. John Ervine, with his gift for simplifying psychology through condescension, has been looking on dubiously at an excess of movies and has retired before the twentieth century without a blow struck, thanking God that the theatre is still left to preserve delicacy, taste and the other by-products of belles-lettres. Most of us under the age of eighty are liable to congratulate ourselves that we cannot claim those evangelical links with the suburban theatre of 1900 which keep Mr. Ervine's criticism of the cinema permanently at the stage of a mediaeval baron discussing air-conditioning. But the congratulation is over-hasty. The Left-Winger, circumspectly applying standards he would call wholly 'cinematic,' may find himself as muddled to know why he likes a movie as Mr. Ervine is to discover why he doesn't.

The current offerings establish an all-time high for standard-teasing. Some of them may be judged finally on a point of technique. And into others, discussions of cutting, of tempo, of verisimilitude, are the merest precious intrusions of an intelligence too academic to perceive that nothing less than an

urgent political credo is being skilfully misrepresented. There is always, however, Mae West to like or dislike for herself.

The recent Pabst season at the Everyman could hardly be expected to encourage anything more than technical speculations and regrets. Most of my own regrets, especially during the showing of the early *Crisis*, were for the telescopic curtness of the silent camera, bludgeoning every attempt at naturalism into a St. Vitus's dance, caricaturing a moment of pathos—and I am sure that in the original performance (I mean the performance we saw on the screen plus the gestures the camera was too slow to record) Gustav Diesl had many—into petulance.

Already the 'early primitive' look of some of these famous silent films can be their only claim to criticism. *Waxworks*, even when projected at the slowest possible speed, is so rapid and grotesque a caricature that the Left Wing must take refuge, I suppose, in saying that this telescoping gives it a conventionalism the cinema will never regain. Which I sincerely hope it will not. Similarly, Pabst's *Joyless Street*, put on in a hacked version remarkably by the Empire as a bait for Garbo fans, now seems a laboured morality entirely on account of its speed, which gives the acting a neurotic pitch it probably never possessed.

These and several other unrelated films of the quarter can give pleasure only to those with some



A scene from **THE SCOUNDREL**, directed by Hecht and MacArthur (Paramount)



technical appreciation of film-making. Technical criticism should, anyway, be the specialist's excuse for illuminating live material. And since the emotional issues of *Crisis* and *Joyless Street* are as dead as last year's newspaper, there's no point in cluttering these notes with reports of an autopsy.

There are a few intermediate films (it should be obvious by this time that everything in this article is a build-up to the last paragraph) which are at the stage of deliberate or unconscious trickery, where the technique and the material fidget somewhere between smart-aleckry and emotional honesty. In this group I make no apology for linking *Roberta*, *The Scoundrel*, *The 39 Steps* and *The Mark of the Vampire*.

*Roberta* is an essay in the old ambivalence of musical comedy—trying to reveal the ultimate charm

of an ultra-sophisticated get-up beneath which beats a heart of sophomoric piety. This sort of film defeats its air of innocence with the elaborateness of its décor and loses every point in sophistication by bothering to affect a heart at all. Of course, it's easy to give the irrelevant assurances that the dancing, at any rate in *Roberta*, is expert and the dress-parade informing. But these assurances get you and me nowhere.

*The Scoundrel*, the second of the Messrs. Hecht and MacArthur's revolutionary protocols, shows this team already complacent in their rebellious gesture. Here is a movie technically neat and shining, smug in a competence which never for a single instant abandons knowingness for perception.

Mr. Hecht and Mr. MacArthur, and it need barely be added, Mr. Coward, know all the answers, whether the questions are about marriage or lap-dissolves. And their little



**WAXWORKS**, recently revived at the Forum Cinema, Villiers St. Emil Jannings, Conrad Veidt and Werner Kraus played leading parts.

*By courtesy of the Forum Cinema.*





PASSPORT TO FAME in which Edward G. Robinson plays a dual role, directed by John Ford (Columbia)

morality, about a witty rake who reforms after death, has all the metropolitan satisfactions that the trio would sooner die than sacrifice.

It's knowing, ambiguous, amenable to being taken several ways, any way that could never accuse its authors of naiveté. This cocked eye at the audience-response reveals in the end only the crassest indecision. And the authors seem to have wasted ninety minutes on mocking each other in public, with the aid of what *Time* nicely called 'Manhattan's neurotic literati dressed up to look like bogeymen replete with malice.' My only grudge is that Lee Garmes, an honest and talented cameraman if ever there was one, is kept on Long Island assisting at this perpetual cocktail party while he could be away, far away making likeable movies in the comparative maturity of Hollywood.

The 39 Steps opens, like all Mr. Hitchcock's films, confusedly and trickily. But whereas *The Man Who Knew Too Much* eventually straightened into an intelligible and even thriller, *The 39 Steps* stays confused. This might have been an excellent film (but then which wouldn't?). Mr. Hitchcock had a story and a script of considerable waggishness. And this sort of humour is a charming, because very disconcerting, counterpoint to suspense. But the story was never digested. Mr. Hitchcock sees his way clearly round bits of business, never round incidents. He seems always distracted to decide the mood of any scene and this indecision passes into the pleasant, but teetering performances of Madeleine Carroll and Robert Donat. And the attempt at odd, Capra-like pieces of inconsequent characterisation (the commercial travellers in the train, the milkman) are unobservant and academic.

Finally, of this uncertain classification, a very unpretending but happy essay in the ghoulish, *The Mark of the Vampire*, directed by Tod Browning, who has a discerning relish for this sort of thing. Some of the cutting, directly from a dispersed and mobile group of figures to precisely

focussed immobile figures, should become a formula for terror. The method is that of first spreading, and hence diluting, the spectator's suspense, which is yet kept alive by prowling figures and a roving camera. The direct cut to absolutely still and grouped figures arrests and centralises the focus too sharply for one's blood stream. Mr. Browning's clever seizures of tempo had their reward in many strangled cries from the audience and at least, when I was there, one fainting fit—which is, I assume, the logical and proper compliment to a thriller.

There remain the pick of the bunch—*The Man Who Reclaimed His Head*, *G. Men* and *Passport to Fame*. I suppose that judged by what they call 'cinematic' qualities, only one of these makes the grade. But my preference must try to substantiate the belief that no prescribed standard can be set for any film. And certainly the only meaningless one to set is the vaguely cultural 'low standard' which many addicts confess helps them to enjoy films they might, from the routine use of their intelligence, condemn. Applied to any other art the pretence resounds more loudly its own hollowness. Say—'I can enjoy quite bad portraits by setting a low standard for painting.' But a standard of what? A standard of literary composition, of correct dressing, of intensity of light, of resistance to headaches? The answer can only be 'a standard of cinema.' And then only the confessedly precious qualify. For by deliberately narrowing the functions of cinema to the parade of esoteric technique, they can legitimately profess to reject propaganda, good dialogue, individual acting, social satire, politically apt subjects, from consideration. But then they would have very many less, not more, films to like. So the pretence holds for nobody. One film will set a standard of photographic virtuosity, another of verisimilitude, another of valid political propaganda, another of shocking, or titillating the senses merely. And I take it that the best film is one that combines and satisfies most of these independent standards.

*The Man Who Reclaimed His Head* asks to be considered as realistic propaganda for peace. It contains a meeting of munitions manufacturers



**G MEN**, with James Cagney.  
Directed by William Keighley  
(Warner)

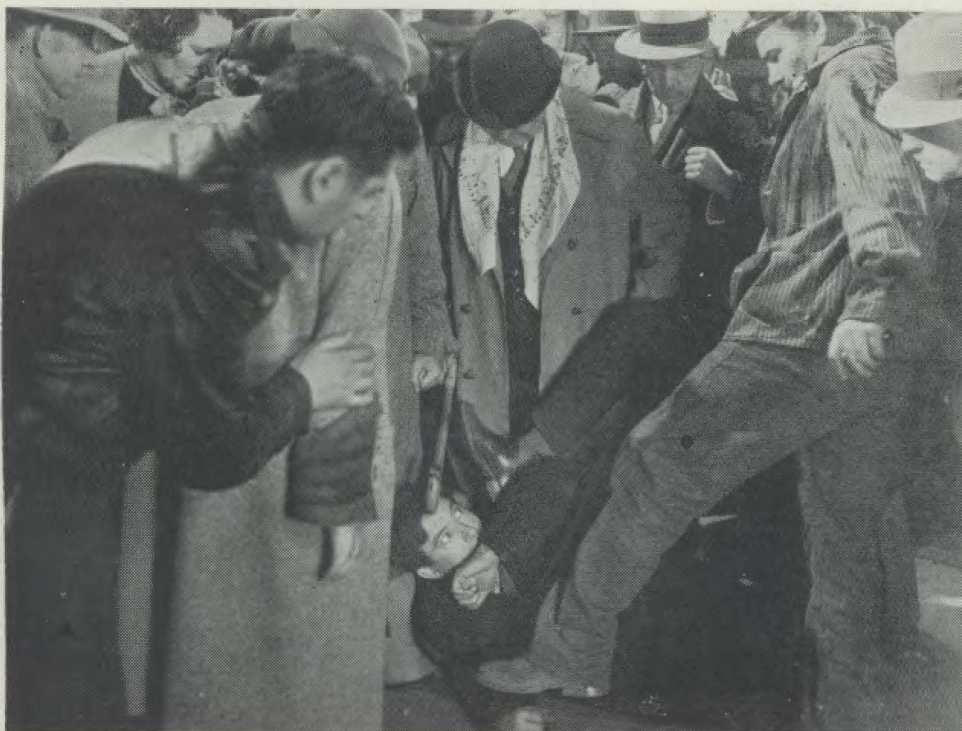
that could have been a photographic record of an actual conference in 1913. And the dialogue is plausible and adult. It would be nice to know whose tip produced this film. Like *The Strange Conspiracy* it quite violently discourages Americans to keep out of a European war. Shown on British screens it has a quite other and embarrassing emphasis. It appears as nothing so much as an excess of truth. Of all the films I have seen this year or last, this one is without doubt the most moving social document. I say so precisely and do not choose simply these words as a rhetorical echo of general praise. This is not to imply that the cinematography is ever subtle, or advanced, or more than competent. But even a competent exposure of armament cartels can have no less than the passion of its facts. Claude Rains' performance is nervously observant and beautifully poised. And the whole tempo, rather slow—at about the irritating pace that such an inquiry would proceed—is zealously and carefully controlled. I should say this was a second-rate movie, a well-balanced play, and decidedly a noble pamphlet, of which Universal Pictures and Edward Ludwig can be personally proud.



*G Men* is the first and will probably remain the best of a series of cinema tributes to the Federal agents recently empowered by Congress to use against the gangster his own weapons. It has to perfection every humdrum quality of production that every other country but America seems too fatigued to ensure. At worst this type of film—*The Public Enemy*, *The Front Page*, *Little Caesar*—will be remembered as hackwork of genius. What prevents a director from having the exquisite speed of this film is no more than—vanity. American directors of this sort—and Milestone as an Americanised Russian is the model—appear utterly short of it—to dally, to point a joke, to delay a fade-out is to them the supreme banality. Surpassing

William Keighley's work in this film is John Ford's in *Passport to Fame*, which deserves to rank only a little below *The Front Page*. The thing is packed with live speech, hurtling characterisation and a story of fiendish sparseness and neatness by Robert Riskin. Of course it is tough, of course it has no nuances, of course it is materialistic. But it knows its world for what it is and recreates it with tremendous honesty and zest.

Claude Rains plays the lead in *THE MAN WHO RECLAIMED HIS HEAD*, directed by Edward Ludwig (Universal)







R.A.F.—one of the documentary films of the quarter reviewed in this article (G.B.D.)

# DOCUMENTARY FILMS

By

J. R. Fawcett Thompson

apparent than real. Into this initial error the producers of *Royal Cavalcade*, the most ambitious of the Jubilee films, promptly fell: through a misconception of the true significance of the event they attempted to do too much—to cover a vast field which the actual occasion did not demand. In this respect, *The King's Jubilee* and *Twenty Five Years a King* were nearer the mark.

Ostensibly framed on the naive idea of the wanderings of a penny from its minting in 1910 until the present year, *Royal Cavalcade* dragged into its scope a heterogeneous collection of historical, social and scientific events, apparently selected for their spectacular possibilities on the screen. These happenings, re-enacted by actors and actresses in the studio, lent an atmosphere of falsity to the entire production and destroyed any chance of success that the original idea might have had.

Reconstruction of actual occurrences of the past that are within living memory, by the use of characters bearing some facial resemblance to the original persons involved is—to my mind—a fundamentally wrong method of handling which can never hope to produce a convincing effect, since it is bound to offend the credulity of the average audience. The problem is one which is the special concern of the documentary director whose theme is of an historical nature and he is far more likely to find a satisfactory solution in implication or suggestion than by attempting direct representation.

*The King's Jubilee* and *Twenty Five Years a King* were both constructed with extracts from news-reels: the former went back to the beginning of the century while the latter was content with the duration of the King's reign. *The King's Jubilee* kept reasonably close to the personal aspect which should have been the core of any sincere treatment of the subject, was cut and edited with some appreciation of dramatic values and although—maybe because—it was only a two-reel picture, was the best the occasion produced.

It may be wondered if anything more worthy would have eventuated had the various producing concerns not disagreed and the original scheme for collaboration been carried through. Or would Alexander Korda have brought forth a film of lasting

## ROYAL CAVALCADE (British).

*Production:* Associated British Picture Corporation, Limited.

*Supervising Director:* Thomas Bentley.

*Story:* Val Gielgud and Eric Maschwitz.

*Length:* 9,450 feet.

## THE KING'S JUBILEE (British).

*Production:* Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, Limited.

*Compiled and Edited by:* Castleton Knight.

*Commentator:* E. V. H. Emmett.

*Length:* 1,789 feet.

## TWENTY FIVE YEARS A KING (British).

*Production:* Pathe Pictures Limited.

*Compiled with the collaboration of:* Sir Austen Chamberlain and John Drinkwater.

*Length:* 4,596 feet.

With the best will in the world to be generous, it is impossible not to confess to deep disappointment at the way in which the British film industry failed to rise to the occasion of the Silver Jubilee. Here, it might have been thought, was an unique opportunity for a documentary film of outstanding interest, for which a warm welcome was practically assured beforehand.

The great pitfall, of course, was the supposed magnitude of the theme—a magnitude far more



Scott's antarctic expedition reconstructed for the Jubilee film, **ROYAL CAVALCADE**, directed by Thos. Bentley (B.I.P.)

importance from Winston Churchill's completed script, abandoned on account of "lack of time"? This projected picture, which had as its declared theme the relationship of the King to the Man-in-the-Street, did, at least, hold out some prospects of interest and value. It is a pity that confidence in His Majesty's longevity was not better founded.



### SHIPYARD (British).

*Production:* Gaumont-British Instructional, Ltd.

*Direction:* Paul Rotha.

*Photography:* George Pocknall, Frank Bundy, Frank Goodliffe and Harry Rignold.

*Sound Recording:* W. Elliott.

*Length:* 2,200 feet.

Some day the true story will be told of how the documentary film has thriven and developed largely by grace of enterprising industrial and commercial organisations. Meanwhile, its directors can best contribute towards liquidating the debt by exerting their utmost efforts to show that such confidence has not been misplaced. Fortunately the majority of them are pursuing this policy—with marked success. And now once again documentary has to make an entry on the debit side and once again Industry is the creditor.

The placing of the order for the Orient liner "Orion" brought new life and hope to hundreds of homes in Barrow-in-Furness and when, early last year, work on the vessel was begun, only the seagulls protested shrilly against the medley of competitive noises that arose with the stirring of activity in the shipyard. Job No. 697 became a magnet which, each morning, drew to itself thousands of tramping feet from all quarters of the town.

At the furnaces over the road the many component parts of the ship were forged and transferred to their places in the yard, and so—from month to month—by the sweat and strain of men's labour, the great hull slowly took shape. On Sundays the magnet lay lifeless and the hurrying feet of the weekday turned a more leisurely step towards the call of the field and the bark of racing whippets.

Then, as summer faded into autumn, amidst the clangour of crane-gear and the machine-gun rattle of rivetters, the vast decks took position—decks that later will echo in another key—to the splash of the swimming-pool, the shouts of deck-tennis players

and the yawns of sun-bathers. Men swarmed like flies over the giant framework and wrought like fiends in its inky bowels. The huge engines were bolted to their beds at last, and as December crept near, only the gleaming propellers were awaited from their birthplace in the South.

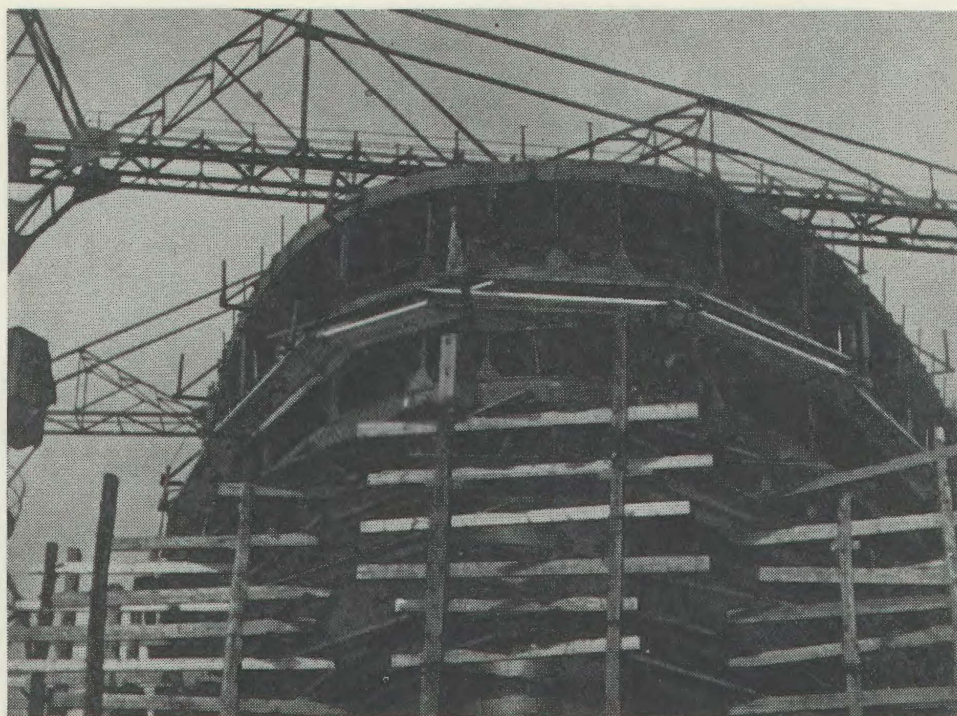
Early on the morning of the launch—a record twelve months since work was begun—gangs of men laboured in the sad winter half-light knocking away the supporting blocks to set free the monster that had been their year-long companion, each straining blow a knell to their own livelihoods. At the touch of a button the S.S. "Orion" slipped solemnly down into the river; the distinguished guests took their leave; only the mournful cries of the seagulls—come into their own again—echoed in the empty yard, giving voice to the feelings of a group of workmen who lingered to watch their handiwork float further and further from the shore.

Paul Rotha's handling of this significant theme is masterly. His grasp of the whole poignant situation is both comprehensive and full of understanding. The vital relationship between ship and town is skilfully emphasised throughout the film. Completing the great task in the space of a year was a triumph, yes—but it was also a disaster. Shipyard compels realisation of this apparent paradox. From the viewpoint of its sponsors, also, the film should be entirely satisfactory since it explores the dramatic possibilities of its subject to the limit.

Technically, Shipyard is full of interest. Rotha, in common with certain other young documentary directors, continues to experiment and if any justification for this were needed it is to be found in this picture. The admirable cutting, the use of slow motion and the sound overlap in the whippet-racing scenes; the powerful deck-sports and streets-of-the-town superimpositions; and the lovely propeller sequence with its brilliant concluding shot demand special attention.

Note also the carefully timed scraps of conversation between the workmen and the soft-spoken





SHIPYARD, by Rotha.  
(G.B.I.)

Lancashire voice of the commentator, as much in harmony with the feeling of the film as a B.B.C. accent would have been in discord. Both photography and sound recording are a credit to those responsible.

Shipyard is a serious and important contribution to documentary cinema. What will Barrow-in-Furness think of it?

#### R.A.F. (British).

**Production:** Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, Limited.

**Direction and Commentary:** John Betts.

**Photography:** Horace Wheddon and Gordon Singleton.

**Commentator:** Squadron Leader W. Helmore.

**Musical Accompaniment:** Band of the Royal Air Force.

**Length:** 3,835 feet.

We have become rather tired of hearing the remark "But why don't *our* film companies make one with *our* Air Force?" whenever some particularly thrilling and spectacular American air-film has been shown. We have been duly impressed with the skill and efficiency of the U.S. Air Force and fully appreciate the far-sighted policy which has dictated the granting of facilities to story-film producers in that country. It has been a little difficult, however, to explain convincingly that British official quarters rather frown on this sort of thing, not, perhaps, without some reason since they have been bitten badly once or twice in the past. The fact remains that, apart from the notable exception of Elton's *Aero-Engine* and infrequent news-reel excerpts, the Royal Air Force has been a closed book to cinema audiences.

a subject so brimful of opportunities and so obviously calling for documentary approach—a picture which should bring an audience to its feet with enthusiasm?

It becomes my sad duty to record that—in these respects at least—R.A.F. is a bitter disappointment. If the director's theme was "Britain's future is in the air," he must have forgotten it before he began. To put it quite plainly—R.A.F. is undisguised recruiting propaganda, first and last. What plan there is behind it makes this clear enough. Opening with the training of recruits, it passes through a series of more or less disconnected sequences showing the various duties of Royal Air Force personnel—aircraftsmen and pilots—and concludes with a display of aerobatics and a sunset. There is a fine parade of smart uniforms and much insistence on sports and games, both well calculated to appeal to the potential "rookie." But of any attempt to explore the wealth of dramatic possibilities in this great subject, there is no evidence at all. Any "thrills" there may be are those inherent in flying itself and are nothing whatever to do with the direction of the film.

The spoken word is confined to the commentary—why, I have not the slightest idea for, with a little imagination, all that was requisite could have been conveyed with infinitely greater effect by the Royal Air Force men themselves in the course of their activities. Sound is used spasmodically when aeroplanes are in flight and bombs exploding, though why it is not used consistently is a puzzle. The musical accompaniment is not only unnecessary but frequently inappropriate. What significance have the bagpipes for the Royal Air Force? And why was a deafening rendering of "The Ride of the Valkyries" deemed suitable for aerobatics? Was it that the aerobatics themselves were

Now, out of the blue — appropriately enough — we have R.A.F. for which "facilities were granted by the Air Ministry and the Admiralty." It was reported, also, that John Betts, the director, with two cameramen had spent eighteen months making the film which had for its theme "Britain's future is in the air." Splendid! Who can blame us if hopes ran high and anticipation was keen of a picture worthy of



# DOCUMENTARY FILMS

considered so feeble a climax that help must be sought from Wagner?

With the photography, however, there is a different tale to tell. Much of it is magnificent. The fine bomber sequence; the 'plane leaving the aircraft-carrier—a wonderful shot; and the superb patterns of the formation flyers almost make R.A.F. worth seeing for its photography alone and give some idea of what remarkable results might have been achieved had the film received treatment other than it has. Indeed, the picture is noticed in these columns not so much for what it is as for what it should have been.

## SONG OF THE SEINE (French).

*Production:* Filmtac, Paris.

*Direction:* Jean Lods.

*Photography:* Boris Kaufman and Louis Berger.

*Music:* Maurice Jaubert.

*Distributors:* Zenifilms, Ltd.

*Length:* 2,000 feet.

## CITY OF LONDON (British).

*Production:* Producers Distributing Company.  
*Length:* 966 feet.

Purely topographical films may not, at first sight, appear to offer much scope to the documentary director which is probably why this field has been left so long virtually untrodden save by makers of the narrative travelogue. The "city symphonies" of Cavalcanti and Ruttmann, long since passed away, gave a lead that has never been seriously followed up, which is regrettable because much good material lies to hand. It is, of course, the backing that is wanting. Given this, there is a number of directors who undoubtedly could and would turn their energies in this direction to good purpose. Someone in France has recently "got busy" and those who would visualise the possibilities of this type of picture should see *Song of the Seine*.

Far back near its source, the Seine flows narrowly between meadow and village—the countryfolk tend their cattle, sow their fields and leave the churchyard full of weeds. From lock to lock—broader and broader—the stream flows on: barges float sluggishly along its waters to moor in one of the larger towns through which the river twists its way. From steeple, bridge and boat we follow it: Melun, with its harsh barracks—then Paris, bridge after bridge and the street-children splashing on the foreshore. Swifter and wider, through industrial surroundings—chimneys and quarries—to Rouen's busy quays and great cathedral. And so, in company with steamers and finally a huge liner, we reach the sea.

Jean Lods has created a charming film—delicately conceived, lazy as a summer afternoon and smooth-flowing as the Seine itself. This lightness of

touch, however, is deceptive and tends to cover an underlying vein of seriousness—the bond linking the river to those who live and work on and by it—which might well have been permitted to show through more clearly. As it is, the human element, though subtly woven into the picture, is not sufficiently pronounced as it might possibly have been with success had speech and sound been recorded. A somewhat churlish observation, perhaps, since Maurice Jaubert's music is in perfect harmony with the theme. Quickening in tempo as the river draws nearer and nearer to the sea, it works up to an exuberant vocal chorus of greeting as the ocean is reached, thereby adding considerable force to the climax of the film as a whole.

Titles cut out on photographic backgrounds obviate any interruption of continuity, with one glaring exception—"Rouen"—which must surely have been a slip. The photography, though uneven in quality, is often very beautiful—the dignified Rouen sequence in particular remains in my mind.

City of London an unpretentious little "short" is interesting because it suggests what could have been done had the film been produced on a more generous scale. The opening run round the City streets is ingenious and makes a good introduction while the overhead shots of narrow alleys and roadways (such as that of Walbrook) give a fresh and attractive line on material of this nature. Unfortunately the rest of the picture, accompanied by a rambling commentary, is thrown together anyhow.

City of London: ancient heart of the greatest capital in the world! What a subject—what an opportunity! And all there for the taking.

## NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA FILMS

A number of propaganda films made to illustrate the work and policy of the National Government were shown recently at a private viewing in London. It was explained in a foreword that the films were intended as a review of the past and present activities of the Government and they are to be exhibited throughout the country on a fleet of self-contained travelling cinema vans. A speaker travelling with the van answers questions after each performance and distributes leaflets.

There are eight films in all. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, shown speaking in close-up, gives a general introduction; Mr. Neville Chamberlain talks on the Budget; Mr. Elliott speaks at the conclusion of a film on English agriculture; Sir John Simon is shown speaking on the Government's foreign policy; while Mr. Baldwin gives a general survey entitled *Britain Under the National Government*. In addition there is a film on Scottish industries and another on Scottish agriculture, intended for distribution in Scotland only, and a story film with a moral, *Without Prejudice*. The Scottish films have a Scottish commentator.

The conditions under which the films are to be shown required the adoption of a slow-moving and simplified technique, with few remarkable features. Only in Mr. Baldwin's film was there any attempt at interweaving the speech with relevant scenes. The story film was possibly the poorest of the series in that it was so simplified as to defeat its end with certain audiences: the character of the Socialist was so limp as both to rob the film of dramatic quality and to miss a valuable opportunity, which the other films could not give, of dealing with some possible opposition arguments. The films are available on both standard and 16mm. copies, which can be supplied through the local political agent for display in cinemas or small halls.

E.H.L.



## FILMS AND THE SCHOOL

## A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS

## FILMS AND LIVING GEOGRAPHY

By G. J. Cons

Lecturer in Geography, Goldsmith's College, University of London

THE time has been reached when film companies are producing teaching films specifically designed for use in schools. If these teaching films are to take their place in the school courses and fulfil their function as an aid to the teaching of the particular subject, they must reflect the modern attitude towards the subject, considered not only as a branch of knowledge but as an instrument of education. For this purpose geography and most of the other subjects of the school curriculum must be studied carefully from the standpoint of cinematography.

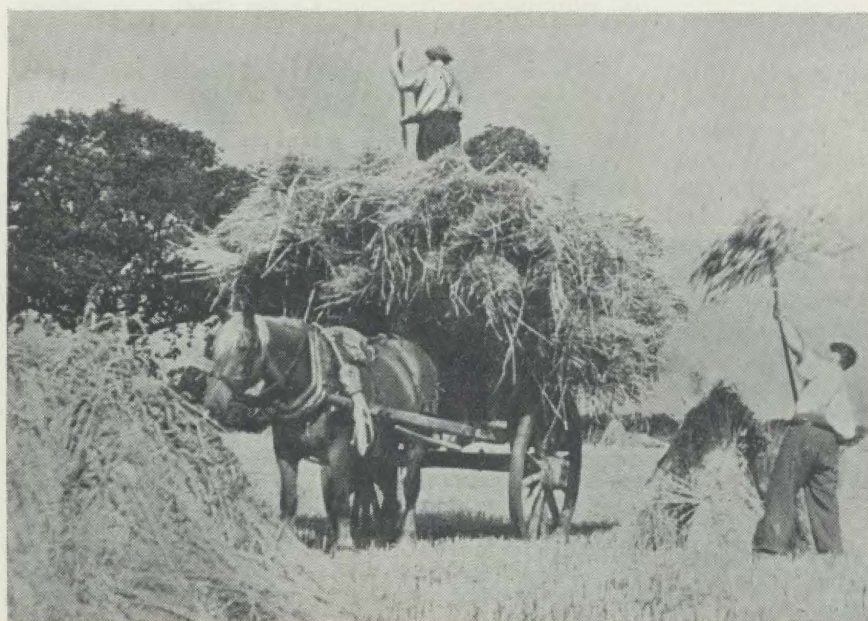
## Man in his Environment

It is generally accepted that the branch of geography, known as human geography, is the vital aspect of the subject for schools. Hence any director of geographical films, in order to make the appropriate selection of the sequences in the development of a particular topic, needs to have an appreciation of the content and scope of human geography and also of the modern methods of teaching the subject. It is noticeable, for example, in *Wheatlands of East Anglia* (G.B.I.), considering Reel 1 as complete in itself, that the emphasis is on the life cycle of wheat and its climatic environment, together with the associated processes of cultivation. But to be in keeping with the essential spirit of human geography and in sympathy with the modern methods of teaching the subject, it is the adjustment of human groups to their environment that needs portraying. Man should be in the centre of the

geographical scene, collaborating with all the living forces of the region, becoming effective by his mobilisation of the living world, especially its cultivated plants and domestic animals, and changing the face of the region by his activities. In order to depict a region it is man in action in the region that defines the angle of vision for the selection of the sequences. *Wheatlands of East Anglia* is a pioneering film and is a praiseworthy effort, as will be shown presently, but there is this misplacement of emphasis, at least in Part I of the film, that makes it less effective as an aid in the teaching of regional geography.

## Breaking down Subject Barriers

This idea of "man in action in the region" needs to be elaborated. Before doing so, it is necessary to draw attention to the wider application of the idea. Many teachers are seeking methods whereby life's actualities may be brought into the classroom. They realise that the powers of a large proportion of our children, especially those in senior schools, can never be fully liberated by the study of subjects as such. The barriers between subjects are artificial. Life is not lived in terms of subjects. It is in the borderland territory where subjects overlap that knowledge touches life. It is in the breaking down of subject-barriers and in the exploration of this borderland territory that the film is going to be a great aid. In such films as *The Rising Tide* and *Shipyard* there is a quality of life that transcends the narrow world of the text book. After a visit to a local factory in the neighbourhood of a school which led on to a study of 'Our Machine Age,' a class of senior boys, age 13+, was shown *The Rising Tide* in order to give them an experience of our industrial life in its widest implications. In a similar way, *Climbing Mount Everest* was used to give the children an experience of man in action



A scene from *THE WHEATLANDS OF EAST ANGLIA*, directed by Mary Field (G.B.I.). The film is discussed in this article by Mr. Cons



in another field of human endeavour. Undoubtedly such films are going to help to free education from its bookishness and lifelessness. All that can be done here is to indicate the place of such films in helping to solve some of our problems of unreality in modern teaching.

### Teaching Geography

It is necessary to return to the question of geographical films. In the striking set of sequences depicting the cultivation of wheat on a seasonal basis, given in *Wheatlands of East Anglia*, even though wrongly oriented as explained above, there is revealed a suggestion for the appropriate way of presenting a region. The region is the unit of study in geography and it is in the presentation of a region that cinematography can be of most service to the teaching of the subject. It would be possible to make a photographic record in terms of the geographical categories of structure, relief, climate, natural vegetation, production, etc., arranged in some kind of continuity; such a 'logical' film would be little more than an animated textbook version of a region. It is obvious that cinematography has extended the scope of the picture as a geographical record. By reason of the artistry of cinematography the moving picture can be more than a succession of 'stills,' it can be invested with a unity and continuity that creates the feeling of 'livingness.' A series of still pictures of an Alpine Valley can give a particular record of its shape, its vegetation, its habitations, etc.; but the moving picture, by the appropriate selection of the 'shots' and by the artistry of their arrangement that springs from a true appreciation of the subject, can capture something of the spirit of the people and of the place. It is this personality of the region that needs to be presented; it is the expression of the typical regional experience that should come to life on the screen. Undoubtedly it is in this power of the film to evoke an appreciation of the 'genius loci' that there lies its value as an aid in the teaching of geography. To achieve this, the region should not be thought of in terms of its static constitution of structure, relief, etc., but in terms of its dynamic aspects. A region is part of a living universe and it is

characterised by a series of fundamental movements, of essential rhythms. To some extent this idea has been given shape in the first reel of *Wheatlands of East Anglia* in that the round of farming processes is given in terms of the seasonal rhythm.

### Rhythm as a Keynote

This idea is most important. It gives the keynote of the relationship between regional geography and cinematography. Regions differ according to their arrangement of rhythms. There are daily rhythms characteristic of regions—in the diurnal changes of light and darkness, of heat and cold, and in the tropics, of rainfall—in animal activities—in human activities, etc. There are also seasonal rhythms which change with climatic type, the type of vegetation and also the type of economy. There are important interruptions of rhythms, based on climatic irregularities, on catastrophic structural factors such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and on biological factors such as locust plagues and disease epidemics. For the filming of a region its most significant rhythms, daily and seasonal, must be carefully selected and then arranged in an appropriate time sequence to give unity. As stated above, these rhythms should be conceived in terms of human response. It is the varied life of man moving to the rhythmic pulse of the region that should be seized upon. The Tibetan yak driver, the Egyptian fellah, the East Anglian wheat-farmer and a Bengal peasant each live in a world quite unlike the others; each has an experience arising from the round of activities, which is conditioned by the physical setting of their regions. It is a sympathetic portrayal of this regional experience that cinematography can give. There should be no attempt to explain the causes of the phenomena depicted; if that is needed it can be left to the teacher and the text-book. It is a vivid and stimulating presentation of man in action in the region that is needed by the teacher.



Grape picking. From *THE WINE HARVEST IN THE PFALZ*, one of the films in the Ensign Library



# ROAD SHOW SERVICE

## A YEAR'S REVIEW

**I**N an interview with Mr. F. A. Hoare, who is in charge of the Western Electric Educational Department, the following interesting facts were revealed following the review of the past year's progress which has just been made at the end of the Spring Term.

It was just over a year ago that it was decided to place £30,000 worth of 16 mm. portable talking picture equipment in the field. It was at that time decided that this equipment should not be for sale, but should be available for hire at a reasonable cost, together with operators and films. That this decision was acceptable has been proved by the very extensive use which has been made of this Service.

The demand has been really phenomenal for the use of this equipment by schools, clubs and societies of all kinds in every part of the country. Since December 1933, over 15,000 exhibitions of films in schools and similar places have been given and in no single instance has an exhibition had to be abandoned through the failure of the equipment.

This 100 per cent. consistency is due first of all to the care and attention given to the design of the equipment; secondly to the fact that only trained operators are allowed to handle the machines, and thirdly to the continuous servicing of the equipment by skilled engineers, whose regular inspections have been a prominent feature of the scheme.

Asked what lessons had been learned from this experience, Mr. Hoare said that they could be dealt with under four headings.

Firstly, the great advantages of retaining control over the equipment were apparent. Careful operation and maintenance are the keys to high quality picture and sound reproduction, and constant care and attention to these matters are clearly imperative.

A musical appreciation series has been added to the Western Electric Hiring Service Library. The camera has been used to show the playing of individual instruments

## HOW TO PLAY TENNIS (Western Electric Hiring Service)

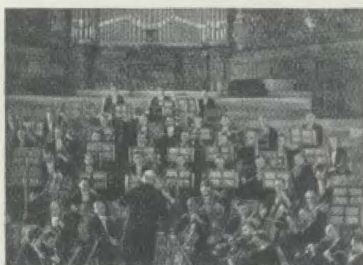
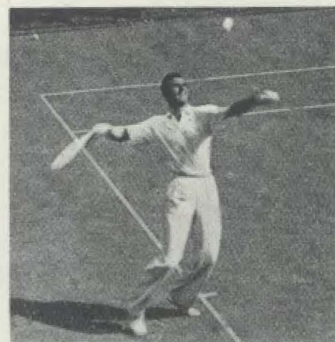
Secondly, the projection of sound films differs fundamentally from the projection of silent films and is a much more complicated procedure.

The comparatively limited number of 16mm. sound films at present available also makes hiring of equipment preferable to outright purchase.

Thirdly with regard to films, background films have proved more popular than teaching films proper. Climbing Mount Everest has proved an enormous success, over 700 exhibitions of this film alone having been arranged.

The Physical Science series, of which *Molecular Theory of Matter* is an outstanding example, while commanding almost universal approval have been less in demand. Incidentally it is proposed to put out silent versions of these films next term, and teachers' handbooks are also being prepared for use with them.

Among the new instructional pictures which have, within the past few weeks been incorporated in the Service Library are four musical subjects, a series on *How to Play Tennis*, and a new travel series. The musical subjects are well known classical compositions, played by world famous orchestras: *William Tell Overture* by Rossini, played by the Berlin Symphony Orchestra; *The Meistersingers*, a short extract from Wagner's opera, played by the Berlin Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; *Oberon Overture* written by Weber, and the *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* by Franz Liszt, both played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. The travel films *Sea Change*, *Northern Summer*, *People and Places* and *Sheltered Waters* have been produced from material gathered during extensive touring in the Mediterranean, Near East and Scandinavia. The first three were produced by Alex Shaw, a young documentary film director, and *Sheltered Waters* is the work of Evelyn Spice, who will be remembered as the director of *Weather Forecast*.





# TRAINING YOUNG CRITICS

## HEMEL HEMPSTEAD EXPERIMENT

By A. Maxwell Lewis,

Assistant Physics Master, Hemel Hempstead Grammar School

**T**HOUGH there are many who are still prejudiced against the use of films in schools, it is equally true that the importance of the film in education and the experiments which have shown its importance are widely appreciated. But to prove that the film can be used in teaching is not to demonstrate the most successful method or methods of using the film, nor to reveal the type or types of film which will yield the best results in practice.

### Origin of this Experiment

If the film is to be used in teaching, surely the first step in applying it is to make a thorough investigation of the fundamental properties of the medium? It is obvious through the medium of letters, that no man can teach, and no child can learn unless both understand the alphabet, and are able to read and express themselves in writing. It must be equally true that in using the film medium, both the teacher and the child must understand the alphabet of filmic expression and be able to use this

alphabet in interpreting the films used in teaching, if the teaching is to be successful. It was to prove the truth of this statement that this experimental research was devised.

### Objectives

The main objective was therefore to test the effect of training in film observation and appreciation upon the ability of a child to learn from an instructional film or from a film made specially for teaching purposes. Included with this main objective were several subsidiary objectives. These were:

- (1) to set up standards by which all films, instructional or purely entertainment may be judged, and thereby to establish a basis of critical discrimination between good and poor films.
- (2) to encourage the criticism of films and the expression of opinion; with a view to stimulating in the coming generation of adult audiences a demand for the best use of the medium in commercial productions.
- (3) to appreciate the art form of the medium.
- (4) to assist in the recognition of the true individuality of the film medium.
- (5) to obtain information upon the attitude of children generally to education by films, and to educational films.

### Method

#### (A) Organisation.

In deciding upon the method to be followed in the experiment, a number of local conditions had to be considered. The school had no projector, so for practical work it was necessary to go outside the school. We were fortunate in securing the co-operation of a local cinema which arranged special matinees, held in school time, for children taking part in the experiment. It was decided to organise the experiment as a part of the school work, interfering as little as possible with the general routine of the school, in order to indicate how such a course would fit into the usual school curriculum. This had the effect also of detracting from the novelty of the work.

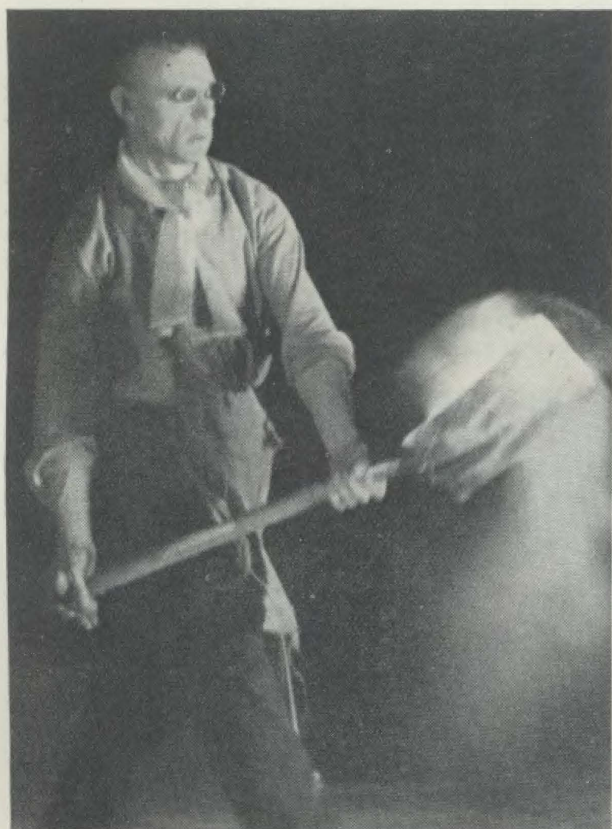
Two groups of children of approximately the same age and intelligence were required to act as Experimental Group and Control Group. Examination forms and the Junior School were excluded, and the children had to be taken from the Middle School, which was divided, by forms, into the two necessary groups, giving an average age and intelligence approximately equal, thus:—

#### (1) Control.

Form III (*Intelligent*)  
Form IVa (*Old*)

#### (2) Experimental

Form IV (*Intelligent*)  
Form IIIa (*Old*)



STEEL, by Rotha, was used as one of the films in Mr. Maxwell Lewis's experiment (G.B.I.)





Mr. Maxwell Lewis giving a practical lesson in cinematography

These two groups were each about 60 strong and contained equal numbers of boys and girls.

Their work was arranged as follows: the experimental group received one lesson per week in school time equivalent to one school period, on the technique of film observation and film appreciation. Both groups together visited the cinema once every week for a special matinee occupying 30 minutes in which a specially selected film was projected twice concurrently. Immediately after the matinee the children returned to school, and answered a questionnaire upon the film they had just seen. This part of the experiment occupied in all 9 weeks. It will be continued at the end of the present term, allowing a lapse of 4 months, by a brief memory test along the same lines.

#### (B) *The Lectures*

The lectures were built upon the plan discussed above, under Origin and Objectives of Experiment, and aimed at setting out in a simple way an alphabet of the essential properties of the medium.

The properties of the medium were studied and arranged one at a time as the subject of a lecture, and an appropriate symbol for them was invented. The particular uses of each property were fully discussed, and illustrated wherever possible by still pictures, slides, experiments, and, of course, references to the films already seen in the course of the week. Reference was also made to films which were known to have been released in the district. The treatment accepted the moving picture in monochrome as the essential material with which the film artist works. Therefore it was possible to introduce sound and colour towards the end of the series, in their true relation to film, namely as further properties of the medium already analysed, and consequently incidental to the silent monochrome picture. It is claimed that this method lays the basis for the appreciation of the true nature of film and for useful criticism on the part of the children.

#### (C) *The Films*

The films were provided through the courtesy of Gaumont-British Instructional Ltd. Some were made by them for use as instructional films, others were made specially for teaching purposes. The

films were selected to give (a) variety of subject-matter, and (b) variety of treatment. Some contained special points which suggested interesting subjects for investigation, such as the addition of incidental music to the commentary. The films used were the following, in chronological order:—

1. WHEATLANDS OF EAST ANGLIA (*Geography*).
2. STEEL. (*Civics*).
3. THE LIFE CYCLE OF A PLANT (*Botany*).
4. THE GREEN PLOVER (*Nature Study*).
5. THE AMOEBA (*Biology*).
6. TOWN SETTLEMENT (*Economic Geography*).
7. HOW TALKIES TALK (*Mechanics*).
8. BUTTERFLIES AND NETTLES (*Nature Study*).
9. THE FILTER (*Natural Science*).

All these films were sound films of standard size.

#### (D) *The Questionnaires*

The questionnaires were made up on the principles of the "New" type of questionnaire, and each was divided into three parts. (I) A Knowledge Test, in which the knowledge of a subject gained from the film was tested; (II) An Observation Test, in which the ability of the child to observe detail in an individual shot was examined; (III) An Opinions Test in which the child was asked to record his opinions in answer to certain points raised about the film, to give his own general criticism of the film, to make suggestions and to raise any queries of his own upon the film. In making up the questionnaires no previous knowledge of the subject matter of the film was assumed. A special point was made of collecting week by week questions by the children upon any matter connected with films either instructional or entertainment that they might have seen during the week.

#### (E) *Practical Work*

It was recognised that in addition to illustrating the lectures with slides, still photographs and demonstrations, practical work by the members of the Experimental Group would be of great use in bringing home the principles discussed in the lectures. The best method, but the most expensive, was that of making a school film. The question of time as well as money was also germane to the proposed practical work. However, one of the lecture periods was devoted to making one reel (100 feet) of 16 mm. film

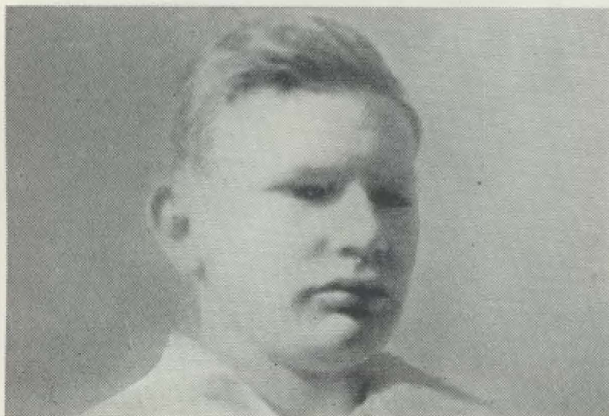


A scene from the film made at the Hemel Hempstead Grammar School



about the school. Messrs. Kodak Ltd., very kindly co-operated in this work by loaning the school the necessary apparatus. To make the film the Experimental Group was organised as a Production Unit as explained in a previous article by the author in SIGHT AND SOUND, Vol. 3, No. 10, Page 75, entitled "The School Film Society."

The obvious disadvantages of expense in a school film have now been considered in the light of information obtained in the course of the experiment, and a set of experiments involving the use of simple apparatus has been designed to illustrate most of



A "close-up" from the Hemel Hempstead School film

the fundamental principles required in such a course as this. The apparatus can easily be made in any school equipped with a workshop or science laboratory.

### Observations

The observations made from this experiment may be divided into two groups and called respectively Qualitative and Quantitative. From the questionnaires a large number of observations have been made which are capable of mathematical evaluation, yielding a series of quantitative results. Each questionnaire asked on an average 100 questions. There were 10 questionnaires, and 110 answers to each, making in all 110,000 items to record, examine and assess. It will readily be seen that the task of evaluating the questionnaires will be a heavy one and will take time to complete. At the moment of writing, progress made with this part of the work indicates that the principles upon which this work was based will be confirmed.

The qualitative results are more easily estimated. Firstly, the attitude of the children towards the experiment. Keenness and marked interest have been the keynote of their attitude; visitors have remarked upon the attention paid to the films during matinees and the vigour of the attack upon the succeeding questionnaires. This attitude was maintained throughout the whole term.

Secondly, the questions supplied by the children themselves provided much of interest. One of the

chief items was the series of questions asked upon matters concerning the technique used in making the films; for example, questions about accelerated motion used in speeding up the growth of plants. These questions were useful also in planning the future lectures. There are many qualitative observations to be drawn from the questions included in Part III of the questionnaires, but it is considered advisable to defer them until the complete results of the questionnaires are available.

### Results

In addition to assessing the attainment of each individual child in each questionnaire, each separate question in turn must itself be examined. This necessitates the recording of departures from the correct answer to a question; it is not simply a matter of marking an answer right or wrong. Hence the 110,000 answers will demand time in their disposal, and the job of dealing with them must again be a one-man job. Therefore the results obtained so far, being incomplete, will again be deferred until the complete series is available for publication. There are, however, some qualitative results which are of importance. The attitude of the children disproves the conviction of some that teaching with films will induce mental laziness in children. Their keenness was the result of the work alone and the method of treating it, for apart from emphasising the necessity of a serious attitude to the experiment, no attempt was made to stimulate an artificial interest. It was believed that the nature of the questionnaires was also instrumental in arousing and maintaining their interest.

The smooth running of the experiment and the lack of interference with the general routine of the school indicates that such a course of Film Appreciation can be included in any school syllabus. It is suggested as an alternative to Music in the Middle School, and, for really adequate treatment as a practical subject, would require a year. Such a course is flexible and is adaptable to any age, but Middle School age is regarded as most suitable.

A School Film Society would, of course, assist materially with such a course.

It should be pointed out that the treatment of the lectures gave precedence to the objectives of the experiment in strict order. Thus the entertainment film which might be regarded as a more important subject received incidental consideration. It certainly received consideration. Also a high standard was set throughout intentionally.

### Conclusions

This article contains an account in outline of most aspects of the experiment as carried out, full details of any one topic being impossible for reasons of length. The author would, however, be very glad to receive any comments, criticisms or queries from readers, and will do his best to reply either through the courtesy of the proprietors, in the columns of SIGHT AND SOUND, or in correspondence.



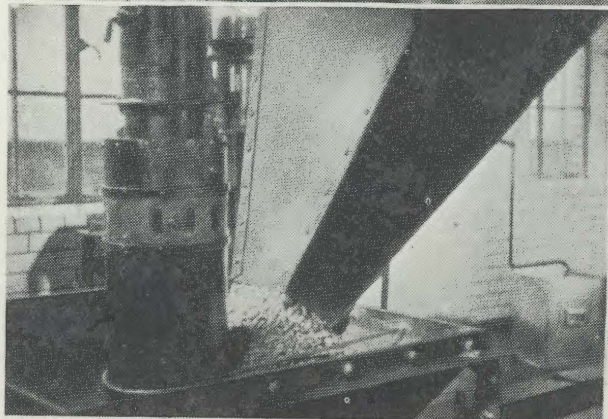
## FILMS IN JUNIOR INSTRUCTION CENTRES

By A. C. Cameron, Secretary for Education,  
City of Oxford

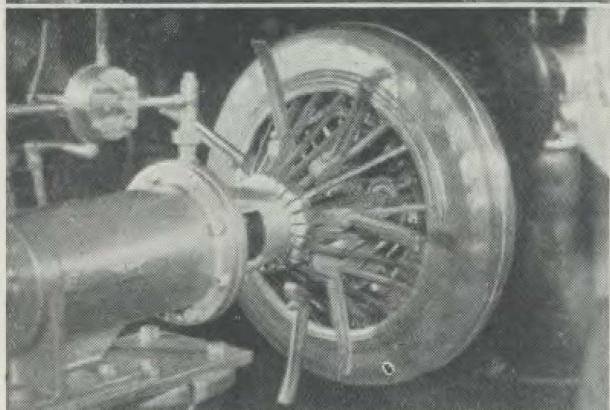
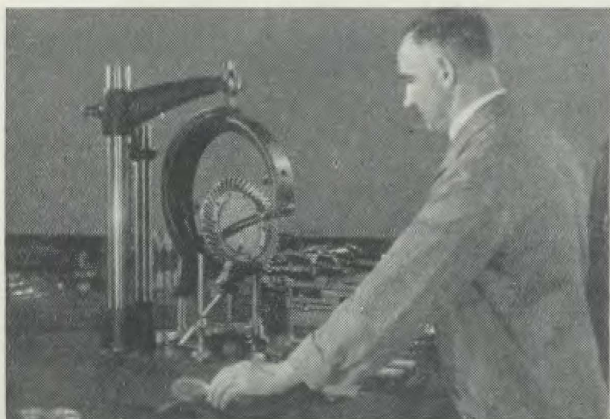
IN writing these notes I want to make it quite clear that I am not writing from experience, but am suggesting the lines of possible experiment, in a medium which, through its connection with the world outside school, should be particularly suitable to the Junior Instruction Centre.

There are two types of film, the entertainment and the instructional; and there are two types of instructional film: the classroom or teaching film, and the school hall or background film. Neither pair can be treated separately. They are inter-related and it is just that inter-relation which makes the film of value in J.I.C. work. The chief influence of cinematography on adults, adolescents and children, but perhaps particularly on adolescents, is and will be in the public cinema. The entertainment film is the great leisure resource of the film-conscious young person, and he or she is nearly always film-conscious. The weekly visit to the cinema would probably be the last small luxury to which the unemployed juvenile will cling.

Therefore, if the J.I.C. shows him a film he connects it with life and fun. It may be possible, for example, to lead a class in an interested approach to what must not be called Geography or Economics,



From *THE NIGHT WATCHMAN'S STORY*, the Cadbury film referred to by Mr. Cameron. *Above*: Natives collecting cocoa beans on the plantations in Africa. *Below*: A shot of interior of factory at Bournville. (Publicity Films Ltd.)



*Above*: Measuring the teeth of the crown wheel to within 1/10,000th part of an inch in *ACHIEVEMENTS OF ACCURACY*, the Austin film. *Below*: Tyre shaping process in the Dunlop film "90." (Publicity Films Ltd.)

by showing, let us say, *Kameradschaft* which, in addition to being a thrilling entertainment, has copious material for illustrating various industrial problems. Or such a film as *The Wheatlands of East Anglia*, composed for the classroom by G-B. Instructional, would have a piquant interest for the industrial young person. In short, he or she will like such films for themselves and get at the same time from them a good deal beyond mere enjoyment.

But they must be good films shown on good machines. The young person will judge them by public cinema standards and will be ready enough to say "Oh, that's only a silly school film." It is no use, therefore, to get hold of an old 35mm. machine and show on it old-fashioned scratched silent films—educational pictures of a type that have had their day. Sometimes, if rarely, 35mm. projectors may be available. Where they are not, the machines supplied should be 16mm. sound-on-film projectors, I.C.E. standard, conforming to the requirements of the British Film Institute.

### From Background to Teaching Films

Background films of this kind, with greater or less entertainment value in them, might lead on, once the interest in films is established, to more definitely classroom—instructional—films of the type of *Surface Tension*, simple experimental science; or the more recent films of bodily hygiene of



which G-B. Instructional are making a series with the advice of Professor Winifred Cullis. In the same connection might be mentioned the same firm's pictures illustrating the Board's new syllabus for Physical Training.

Looking at any kind of film will be regarded by young people as a grown-up job and the teacher will have the advantage of making contact, essential for J.I.C. work, with the lives (home and factory alike) of their pupils and drawing into service the interest and experience of their leisure. The workshop is brought into the classroom.

### Training Taste

The start I have suggested should be made with background films, working through them in one direction towards more strictly educational subjects; and it should also be possible to work up from them in the direction of the entertainment film. It ought to be possible to do some unobtrusive training of taste without being either interfering or sententious. It must, of course, be from the standpoint of "What to see" and not from that of "What not to see." The sequence might be

- (1) Discussion of films currently shown in local cinemas;
- (2) Favourite stars, different technique of different companies and of different film directors;
- (3) What makes a "good" or "bad" film, "good" meaning good of its kind and "bad" meaning bogus.

If they can be led to realise that all the following, to quote a random list, are alike excellent films of their kind, they will begin to realise that their teachers are human, and become more malleable in their outlook towards the Centre:—*Ruggles of Red Gap*, *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, *Little Women*, *The Thin Man*, *I'm No Angel*, *La Maternelle* (it may get shown in an intelligent repertory cinema), *Queen Christina*, *The 39 Steps*.

There is no reason either why a simple film society organisation should not be run, particularly if the interest of a local cinema were aroused. It would mean showing old stuff, but old stuff that was good and before the day of those particular young people might have a considerable appeal if "fan" interest had been skilfully played upon beforehand. It might even then lead on to film-making—short documentary records of incidents in the life of the locality, or perhaps a short melodrama acted by themselves outdoors—calling it, of course, "On Location." At least it has been satisfactorily done by Mr. Ronald Gow for many years at the Altrincham Boys' Secondary School.

### Using Films made for Commercial Propaganda

Taking the industrial background of the particular locality, a good deal might be done by using films specially made for the direction of the staple local industry, e.g., the Morris Motors and Cadbury films. The use of the film for definite technical education, for industrial training, for training in scientific management, for vocational training and in the training of juvenile employment officers, is described in detail in Sections 150-154 inclusive of *The Film in National Life*. One would extract the



A scene from the tea film, *ROSE OF THE ORIENT*, produced for the English and Scottish Joint Co-operative Wholesale Society (Publicity Films Ltd.)

pith, as it were, of the many films designed for commercial propaganda, which have both some entertainment value and considerable educational value for young people familiar with the products shown. They have the great advantage of tracing the raw material to its source.

### Linking up Wireless and Film

Much that could be said about the film in Junior Instruction Centres could be said also of the wireless. In the Centre the two might well be linked up together. If a group follows the B.B.C. talks they might see how they could get films illustrating that particular subject, the young people having access to catalogues themselves and making their own selection. Again, it is possible to get young people to read about places or things in which their interest has been aroused by the talk or the picture.

All the above notes point in one direction. We have in the cinematograph a cultural influence not associated with school; a strong influence on adolescents varying from bad to good, but more often inclined to good. By recognising and canalising this influence we can encourage the building up of a selective adult taste and at the same time do some indirect teaching and arouse interest in subjects which otherwise would sound forbidding.

### LONDON SCHOOLS' FILM SOCIETY

A new Society has been formed to promote the use of the cinema in schools as an aid to teaching and as a cultural influence. The London Schools' Film Society as it is called will also experiment in cinema photography and projection, using non-flam film. Membership of the Society is open to all who are associated with education, including those who are interested in the practical side of cinematography. The Society, which contemplates arranging discussions, demonstrations and exhibitions of all kinds has already a considerable membership representative of many different types of school.

Mr. J. W. Brown, General Manager of the British Film Institute has become the first President. The Secretary and Treasurer to whom all enquiries should be addressed is Mr. F. E. Farley, Sherington Road School, London, S.E.7.



# CINEMA IN SOVIET EDUCATION

By

Beatrice King

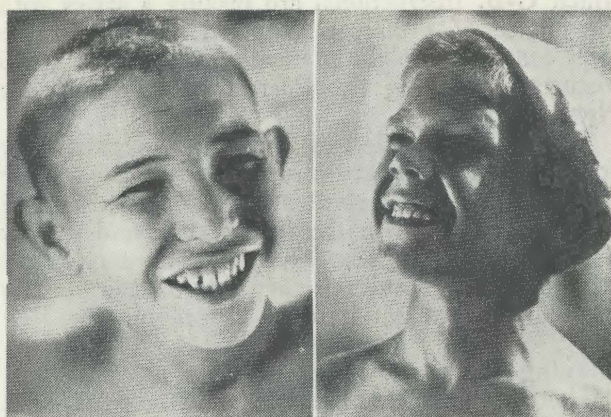
Mrs. Beatrice King is chairman of the Education Section of the Society for Cultural Relations between the British Commonwealth and the U.S.S.R. She here describes how films are used for teaching in Soviet Russia where for several years she has studied educational conditions.

**S**TATE control and a planned economy, though it may be open to many objections, has this in its favour: it simplifies life considerably. There is a unification of interests which eliminates much hostility between different bodies in the community and prevents waste of energy and, frequently, money. Whereas in countries with private enterprise with its conflicting interests, educationists have to spend much time arguing the importance of nursery schools, of education for leisure, of the cinema in education, in the U.S.S.R. they are free to devote all their energies to the proper business of education, research, experiment and study. Let them prove a method or an activity of value to education and at once facilities for its adoption are provided, and every encouragement for its application is given. Can the country afford it—will the Treasury permit it—are irrelevant questions. The country can afford all that it deems necessary for the all-round development of its citizens in an increasing measure each year as production increases.

Though the cinema has been used in education for only a few years, Soviet educationists are convinced of its great value as an aid to teaching. The problem now is the rate at which schools can be fitted for the cinema, the production of suitable films and the training of teachers in the use of films. Quite soon there will probably be a recommendation from the Communist Party that the cinema should form a normal part of the educational process. This will inevitably be followed by a decree issued by the Government enjoining all local education authorities to put this recommendation into practice as speedily as possible.

## A Supplementary Aid to Education

Now what precisely are the implications of this? How will it affect the teacher?



Some of the children in the Crimean Pioneer Colony—

Soviet educationists are very emphatic that the cinema can never replace the teacher. The cinema is to be a new method which is to form part of the general educational apparatus used by the teacher, to supplement text books. It is another tool in the task of raising the educational standard. It can in no way displace the text book, the class lesson, nature, excursion or experiment. For example, a lesson on ice or the "thermometer" can be done better, and should be done, practically.

## Cine-Lesson, Cine-Lecture and Cine Seance

The cinema in education can be used in three ways, the cine-lesson, the cine-lecture and the cine-seance. The most important is the cine-lesson, which should take place preferably in a classroom specially equipped for the purpose. The cine-lecture can be given to larger numbers, 200-250 children in the school hall. This is not regarded as such a useful method, as academic work is not possible with such numbers. It is only where the cine-lesson is impracticable that the cine-lecture in the school may be resorted to. The groups must be formed of children of the same age, for Soviet educationists strongly adhere to the principle that all education should be given according to age. The cine-seance, which takes place in a cinema or club and caters for very large numbers at a time, is last in importance academically. It should be used for general, cultural or propaganda purposes.

## Technique of Teaching with the Film

The use of the cinema in education demands a special technique from the teacher. Special seminars are being organised where teachers can receive the necessary instruction free. If the Soviet teacher resents the extra demand on his time he gives no evidence of it. On the contrary, he gives the impression that he is glad to do his share towards the improvement of education. The cinema in education is also giving rise to a new type of educationist, the cine-lecturer, who will not only serve schools, but adult clubs in state and collective farms, in factories, or wherever the cinema is used for general educational work. Besides his qualifications as a teacher, the cine-lecturer must have such special





—from the film ARTEK

(By courtesy of Marie Seton)

qualifications as correct voice production, a mastery of language and he must be sensitive to the cinema so that his introduction arouses the interest of the audience and his running commentary harmonises in tone, gesture and time with the picture shown.

The cine-lesson requires special preparation on the part of the teacher. He has at the present time to make a list of suitable films and arrange for their delivery to the school in time, not an easy matter in the U.S.S.R. He must have a preview of the films he intends to use, must make notes on the contents of each reel. He must pay special attention to moments requiring particular explanations and make a note of these explanations. He must write out his criticism of the film. Then he must list all the other apparatus required to supplement the film in the lesson, such as maps, diagrams, pictures, models, specimens, apparatus for experiment, etc.

A cine-lesson takes up two ordinary lessons, i.e., 1½ hours. It begins with an introduction, the type of which differs with the lesson. In a geography lesson it means using a map, in a physics lesson it consists chiefly of experiment. While the film is being shown there is the running commentary. In the intervals between the parts difficult points are explained and questions are put to the children and by them. At the end of the film comes a short talk with explanation of anything that is not clear and then a final summing up by the teacher. The children are then set home work on the cine-lesson. The teacher must aim at making the children active participators in the lesson, not merely spectators. They may be asked to copy diagrams shown on the screen into their exercise books, and the winding will cease for the necessary few minutes. They should, before the film is shown, write in their exercise books "What I must learn from the film." If it is a lesson on minerals, and a film on pig iron is being used, they will write the following questions. (1) How is iron ore obtained? (2) How is pig-iron obtained? (3) How is pig-iron smelted? This will give them an objective and activate their interest.

#### Supply of Films

The immediate problem for the U.S.S.R., as for other countries, is the supply of suitable films. There are 24 million children between the ages of

8 and 17 at school. The agitation for these films will begin in the press. The film industry will soon after be directed to produce the necessary films in conjunction with educationists. The educational experts will be supplied by the Central Laboratory for Educational Research and by the Central Institute for the Arts Education of Children, which has for some years been experimenting with purely artistic plays for children. There will need to be planning and adjustment. There will inevitably be some muddle and waste. But the cinema in education in the U.S.S.R. has come to stay.

#### DR. SMART'S ADDRESS TO MIDDLESEX EDUCATION SOCIETY

"I am convinced that, given sufficient encouragement, the film trade is prepared to exert every effort to assist in the introduction of projectors and films in the schools." Dr. J. E. Smart, Director of Education for Acton, made this statement in an address which he gave to the Middlesex Education Society on Monday, May 20th. He went on to explain that the demand up to the present had been comparatively mediocre and disheartening, and that consequently the cost of first-class apparatus had been rendered prohibitive. France and Germany were very much ahead of this country in the use of films in education.

"How are we to get the film in the schools and what do you expect us to do with it when it has been introduced?" were questions Dr. Smart said, to which most teachers wanted an answer. He went on to examine the requirements for the introduction of the film, discussing such essentials as projectors, suitable conditions for showing, supply of the right kind of films, teachers who can use the apparatus.

In speaking of methods of use of the film in the classroom, Dr. Smart said that it was obvious that individual teachers would develop their own ways of presenting the films, having regard to the ages and mentalities of their children, the character of the lessons and the type of films to be shown. "There is no standardised teaching technique," said Dr. Smart. "It is a case of every man for himself." He mentioned some of the ways in which teachers who had had experience with the film used it in their classes, and then went on to state the *pros* and *cons* in the controversy which was still raging as to the relative merits and demerits of silent and sound films.

Dr. Smart drew attention to the work of the Institute and briefly outlined the events leading up to its establishment. He said that he had dwelt for a few moments on this matter because he would like all teachers to know that, if they are contemplating a move towards the introduction of films in their schools, they can obtain advice and information most readily and willingly afforded, from the British Film Institute."

Dr. Smart also considered how the constant attendance at public cinemas affected the child's attitude towards the film used as a teaching medium; and he felt very strongly that the child would have to be taught to cultivate a true film sense, a power of discrimination, criticism and appreciation. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Mr. Maxwell Lewis has also come to this conclusion and, as he explains in an article in this issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, has taken practical steps to train his pupils.

Concluding his address, Dr. Smart dwelt on the cultural aspect of the film, contending that our film ideal must be a faithful and honest portrayal of the best and only the best. "When this has been effected," he said, "then we can expect our children to revolt instinctively against all that is drab and sham and turn rather to the pursuit of beauty with all its accompanying joys and pleasures."



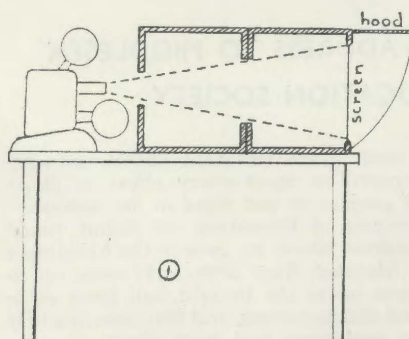
# DAYLIGHT PROJECTION IN THE CLASSROOM

ONE may unhesitatingly say that if it were always possible to project in daylight it would always be advantageous for school purposes.

There are a variety of reasons for this. It is not always possible to obtain complete darkness in a room without making special provision, since blinds are often semi-transparent. Where a complete black-out is made possible there is often also

a complete absence of ventilation. Moreover, darkness prevents the taking of notes, reference to wall diagrams and the maintenance of discipline.

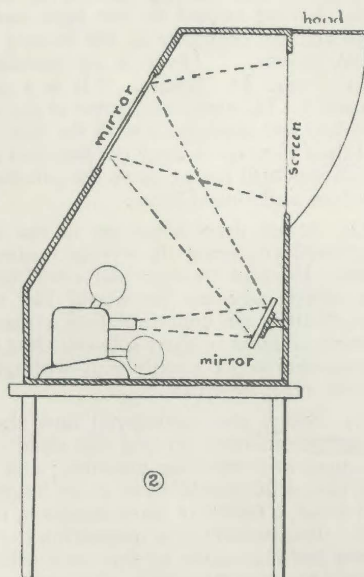
In the school hall daylight projection is usually out of the question, since the size of



No. 1. Straight throw with short-focus lens.

picture required is larger than a school projector can illuminate with sufficient brilliance. In the classroom, however, where a picture only 18 to 30 inches wide is required, the case is different. On such a scale a brilliance of ten to twenty foot candles may reasonably be expected, which, with proper arrangements, will preclude the necessity for any blind-drawing or shutter-closing.

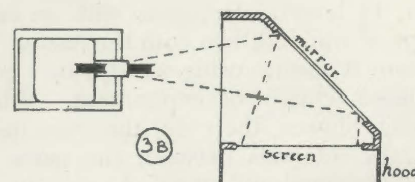
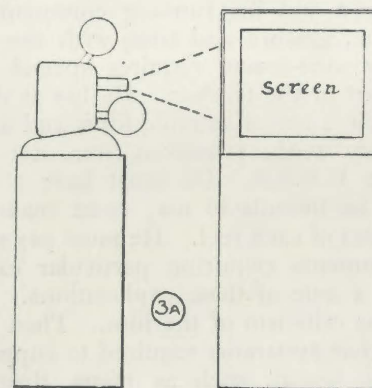
Two methods are possible. One is to use a silver screen, keep the class well in front of it and place the projector in the normal position. The other is to project through a transparent screen. Ground glass set with the matte side outwards may be used if the class can conveniently be kept well in front of it, but its efficiency falls off rapidly at wide angles. Tracing paper or tracing linen give a less intense light straight in front, but maintain the light better when viewed from an angle. Rear projection, as this method is called, possesses the



No. 2. Upward throw with 2 mirrors.

great advantage of bringing the whole of the apparatus right up on to the teacher's dais. He is no longer vexed by the alternatives of a projector running at the back of the room unattended or a class addressed from behind. But the necessity for keeping daylight away from the back of the transparent screen leads to rear projection apparatus being rather bulky. The illustrations show three different types of lay-out for the use of a transparent screen.

The *first* is structurally very simple, in fact it can be made out of a couple of wooden boxes, blacked inside, with appropriate holes cut in them for the passage of the light-beam and the mounting of the screen. A hood in front of the screen made from brown paper, plywood, or black cloth on a wooden frame is an improvement. With this method a one-inch lens is advantageous, in order to shorten the length of throw required.



No. 3a. Horizontal throw with 1 mirror  
No. 3b. Ditto seen from above (N.B. The screen is at right angles to the projector.)

The *second* method employs two mirrors in order to obtain length of throw in a small horizontal space. The drawback of this method is that a good deal of light is lost unless the mirrors are kept scrupulously clean. Both with this method and method 1 the film must be reversed in the gate, as it would otherwise appear reversed left to right on the screen.

Method *three* avoids this necessity, since the single mirror used readjusts the difference made by the projector being behind the screen instead of in front.

It will be noticed that in this method the projector and the screen are on separate pedestals. These can be placed any convenient distance apart across the width of the teacher's dais.

The screen forms the front of a sort of triangular enclosure, of which the mirror forms the back.

From time to time ingenious persons have placed on the market daylight screens with alleged

(Continued on page 98)



# PUBLICATIONS

**THE HISTORICAL FILM**, by Sir Charles Petrie, Bt., *The Nineteenth Century and After*. Constable & Co., 3/.

The May issue of *The Nineteenth Century and After* includes an article on "The Historical Film" by Sir Charles Petrie, Bt., Chairman of the History and Art Panel of the British Film Institute.

The purpose of the article is "to assess the place of the historical film in modern life" and, to avoid confusion, the distinction between "the historical film that has been made solely for entertainment purposes and that made primarily for instruction" is acknowledged from the outset. In turn each type of film is analysed, its inherent difficulties are discussed and the qualities and standards expected of it are suggested. All this makes very interesting reading despite the fact that the writer is not claiming to be original. He is mainly re-stating the findings of other people's research in terms of his own observation as a film-goer and professional experience as a historian. But Sir Charles has arranged his material with such common sense, he has stated the case for all parties with such equity that the subject in his hands ceases to be a matter of academic pother and becomes one of public concern.

Unfortunately the community at large has not yet even surmised that there is a social problem involved in the historical film nor has it realised the extent to which it is open to victimisation by propaganda through the medium of the cinema. And propaganda is intrinsic in the historical film immediately history is taken seriously, a fact of which Sir Charles Petrie shows himself fully aware. "What is one man's history is another's propaganda . . . for the dissemination of the latter the film is a peculiarly suitable medium . . . and it is increasingly difficult to draw a line between the two."

It is again encouraging to note the reliance which is being increasingly placed upon the Film Institute and its aspirations. In this article a tribute is paid to the services which the British Film Institute is rendering the trade and public by putting producers into touch with those who can give them the advice they require, and support is also given to the Institute in its plans for the formation of a library of films which deal with contemporary events, so that these may be carefully preserved for posterity. "In the interests of history in the widest sense it is to be hoped that the necessary funds will soon be forthcoming."

If Sir Charles' article can be assumed as a preamble to the exhaustive report which the Panel over which he presides is preparing for publication, the public is assured that the report will contain matter for intelligent citizens of more than ordinary significance. F.W.

## LIFE AND LEISURE & THE CINEMA IN LONDON

**The New Survey of London Life and Labour. Vol. IX. Life and Leisure.** P. S. King & Son, Ltd. 17/6.

No one will dispute the conclusion of the *New Survey of London Life and Labour* that "to-day the cinema is par excellence the people's amusement." The 258 cinemas in the County of London in 1931-2, with their seating accommodation of 344,000 and continuous performances could entertain over one million people every day and the prices of admission, outside the West End, make attendance possible to almost everyone. According to the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association the aggregate weekly attendances at London cinemas amount to a third of the population. Given these facts it is surprising and disappointing that so little space, about 8 out of 438 pages, is devoted in this volume on the leisure time occupations of London to the cinema and to the consideration of what has been and what is likely to be the effect of this mass entertainment which is, in its technique, commercial organisation, and size of its audiences, so unlike anything that existed when Charles Booth made his original Survey and whose influence to-day is only equalled or challenged by broadcasting.

It may be true, as the Survey states, that these questions are speculative, they are certainly not to be answered without careful consideration, but one would not have thought that they could be outside the scope of the Survey either on the grounds of difficulty or of the space which would have been necessary seeing that similar questions relating to gambling are answered and about 160 pages are devoted to adult education and social organisations which affect only a minority of the population of London. To raise the question of the influence of the cinema only to state that girls form clubs for the worship of their favourite stars and wave their hair à la Norma Shearer, but that "it is impossible to measure the effect the films must have on the outlook and habits of the people" is unworthy of a Survey which has in its other aspects spared no pains to be as explicit as is possible. The attempt was made by a much less ambitious survey made in Hull which was reviewed in Vol. 3, No. 11 of this journal.

Before one would accept the statement that the substitution of cinema going for attendance at music halls, the public house "free and easies" of Charles Booth's days and the time "passed idly at public-house, club or street corner" is a change for the good it is necessary to form at least some idea of the sort of opinions and emotions which are being inculcated by the films which are being shown, not to mention the social effects of the numerous and varied facilities afforded by cinemas apart from the films themselves. "The prime object aimed at is not to instruct or 'uplift' but to amuse"—and everyone would agree—"and in this object the cinema has proved very successful." "Has proved" is to-day more pointedly accurate perhaps than the writer intended for there are signs that cinema audiences are not amused as much as they would wish to be. Or, to put it another way, they are not content with the instruction which they receive. For whether or not the film industry sets out to instruct it cannot help doing so at the same time that, and insofar as, it succeeds in entertaining its patrons. This is not meant to suggest that audiences are clamouring for "the great educational possibilities which have so far been very imperfectly attained" to be realised; although the success of the news theatres and the applause with which good non-fictional shorts are welcomed suggest that there is a demand for good documentary and general interest films, for films, in short, which bear some closer relation to the life by which the mass of cinemagoers are affected. On the possibility of this demand being met no one would disagree with the Survey when it states that "commercial rather than purely cultural factors are likely to be decisive in determining the standard of entertainment to be provided. Certainly up to the present technique has improved much more rapidly than cultural quality, though this also has risen to a marked extent in recent years. And though in present circumstances the cinema must be ranked with the means of amusement rather than of education, the able and alert men who control the industry can be trusted to respond to any indications of an upward movement of taste and appreciation on the part of the vast clientele to which they appeal. But they will probably follow rather than lead that movement." The Survey might, for partial corroboration of this, have considered the influence of the various specialist cinemas, film societies, film clubs and amateur cinematography clubs in London which are helping to create and organise the informed and later vocal minority which is always necessary before reforms and improvement take place. W.F.

## CINEMA AND CHILDREN

**Report of Advisory Commission of League of Nations for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, 1935, League of Nations Publications Department, 40, Museum Street, London, W.C.1. 1s. 9d.**

The Report for 1935 of the work of the Advisory Commission of the League of Nations for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People contains a section on "The Recreational Aspect of the Cinematograph for Young People." As the Report states, "the information before the Commission was partial and incomplete" and



fuller information is to be obtained before any definite opinions are voiced or any specific recommendations made. The Report does little more, in fact, than indicate the important matters which ought to be considered. These include the restrictions on admission of children to cinemas which exist in various countries, the frequency of attendance, the effect of films on the minds of children, the types of films that appeal to children, the provision of special performances and of special films. The most valuable part of the Report is Appendix II, which contains a summary of the replies received from eleven countries, including Great Britain, America and Japan, but this summary too should suggest to anyone reading it the need for collecting more recent and more documented information before any opinions or recommendations on this highly important subject are officially expressed. W.F.

### PRACTICAL SET STRUCTURE FOR THE AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHER, by D. Charles Ottley, Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 5/-.

Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., have recently published a book by D. Charles Ottley entitled *Practical Set Structure for the Amateur Cinematographer*

A prefatory note states that quite a deal has been written about *what* to produce, and *how* to produce, but little about *where* to produce. This is quite true but in confining his work to the equipping of an amateur studio, the author, in our opinion will only interest quite a small section of the amateur cine movement.

Groups or Societies whose primary object is to study technique, or whose sole ambition is to imitate the professional people, will find this book a fund of useful information as it deals not only with "Set-making" but also with general studio equipment such as wiring, lighting, etc., and ends with a brief note on sound.

One is inclined to skip the opening chapters as it is just a little tiresome to be told the obvious. The book begins by telling us we must have tools and the author proceeds to go into minute detail about the cost of each article—it seems so superfluous, although this may be good in so much as it points out the pitfalls to expect if cheap materials are used, but the essential thing, from the amateur standpoint, is first to decide whether or not a studio is necessary and worth while.

The book reminds us that the camera is much more critical than the human eye; it is very desirable therefore, if any amateurs contemplate studio work that they should have in the group a few "handymen" who can make a good job of the business, and an artist of no mean ability.

It is not our wish to discourage indoor cinematography, indeed it is very desirable, but what we deplore is the growing tendency to rig up sets to represent outdoor scenes when nature provides us with the real thing of such natural beauty. We appreciate that it might very often be quite impossible to find a setting exactly fitting some essential part of the story and the director or producer must then construct it, but as flats, clothes and studio properties never look real unless exceptionally well made and cleverly designed, it is wise to adapt the story to fit some known interior or exterior location in the near vicinity.

This controversial subject, however, has nothing to do with the book under discussion as Mr. Ottley is giving instructive advice on small studio equipment in a worthy endeavour to assist those who wish to build "Sets," but nevertheless this "Set-building," to portray ordinary domestic interiors, reminds us of the professor who laboriously distills gases to quench his thirst and ignores the water tap at his elbow.

Chapters XVI and XVII devoted to "Effects by Lighting" and "Effects by Suggestion" are both particularly interesting, and in the former we are pleased to note that the author warns the photographer carefully to light extraneous matter and all inanimate objects if these are in the picture to lend atmosphere. Rightly so, the moving object, the player, must be illuminated in addition to and quite apart from, the set behind.

As time passes the enthusiasm becomes greater, and if he takes his work seriously no amateur can afford to ignore



A mask side-lighted by 150-watt secondary flood

The same mask under-lighted by 150-watt secondary flood

These two masks are reproduced in *Practical Set Structure* as representing 'Surprise' (left), 'Sorrow' (right), and "illustrate the importance of position of illuminant, since facial characteristics and expression are largely controlled by the light source."

helpful suggestions. We therefore commend this book by D. Charles Ottley as a useful addition to the technical library. F.S.W.

### METHODIST TIMES AND LEADER. Church and Cinema Number, May 30th, 1935.

"Believing that the cinematograph can be used effectively in the evangelistic work of the Church, we have planned this Supplement to the 'Methodist Times and Leader' in order to record what has actually been done and to assist ministers and officials who are contemplating similar experiments."

An impressive body of experience is represented in the articles, even though, as explained, the enterprise is still in its early pioneering stage. Everywhere the effect of "cinema services" seems to have been greatly to increase the congregations. "One picture is worth 10,000 words," quotes the Rev. E. J. W. Harvey in describing the success of an experiment in a populous and slum area. Particularly interesting is the article by the Rev. Thomas Tiplady, who tells how the Lambeth Mission, once in danger of closing altogether, was saved by the "picture service." The Mission, renamed "The Ideal," has now some 7,000 people on the premises weekly. The problem of bringing young people to church is dealt with by the Rev. R. F. Wearmouth, who purchased a portable projector for use in his circuit when three years ago he found that the lantern service was losing its appeal. There are many further records of the use of the film in the Church up and down the country; a Leicester Church has extended its range as a result of cinema services; experiments at Mildmay Park have been equally successful; in the North of England, in the South and Midlands the film is being used directly and indirectly in Church work. The films shown in most cases are of various types including not only religious, but historical, biographical, travel, humorous and "western" films.

In addition to the record of experiments, treatment and subjects of religious films are discussed in an article on "Some Essentials in Film Making." "The producer of a religious film," says the author at one point, "must be an artist. He must aspire to the heights of sublimity and yet be able to check up on a lighting set-up. He must have an element of mysticism in his make-up and yet be able to tell a character how to ejaculate 'blimey.'"

In the same issue there is an account of the work of the British Film Institute and an article on Lax of Poplar, whose film *Mastership* has been shown in Churches and Mission Halls throughout the country.



# WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

## WORK OF THE QUARTER

### Advisory Council

Reports on the work of Panels and Committees of the Institute were presented at the second meeting of the Advisory Council held on May 16th last. Chairmen of panels introduced their reports and replied to questions. A discussion also took place on projectors for schools, and the Chairman, Sir Charles Cleland, emphasised that the Governors in recommending that schools should install 16mm. sound projectors made to the I.C.E. standard, were looking to the future and were guided by the fact that this standard had been adopted both nationally and internationally. Dr. Smart, Director of Education for Acton, added that in his opinion local education authorities, once they had decided to install projectors, would install the best and most useful and would not be deterred from this by consideration of the difference in cost between sound and silent projectors.

### Panels and Committees

The Institute's project for awarding Vouchers of Approval to films has been the main item on the agenda at the meetings of the Panels and Committees of the Institute during the past quarter. The Vouchers are to be certificates of accuracy and quality and the Panels and Committees had to consider among other things exactly what should be the wording of the Voucher and what should be the machinery for viewing films submitted for the award of a Voucher. The recommendations of the various Committees were considered at the quarterly joint meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Governors and of the Chairmen of Panels and Committees. It was agreed at this meeting that the Voucher should read "Approved by the British Film Institute as of educational and cultural value." The Voucher would be included as an integral part of the film, but would not, in any way, be in abrogation of or in substitution for any conditions contained in the licence issued under the Cinematograph Act 1909 by the Licensing Authorities.

The History and Art Committee has been approached for advice by one of the educational producing firms, and it has been instrumental in securing experts to collaborate with the firm in the production of educational subjects scheduled for the coming year. The Committee has also given consideration to the scenarios of a number of these films and has advised the firm upon the matter.

The Languages and Literature Committee held its first meeting on the 21st June, when Professor Daniel Jones took the Chair. Its terms of reference are :—

- (1) To consider the possible use of films in the teaching of languages to Europeans and non-Europeans both in this country and elsewhere.

- (2) To consider the possible value of films in improving the standard of English speech in this country.
- (3) To consider what steps might be taken to improve the standard of English in the type of film shown in cinema theatres.
- (4) To consider how far certain types of films might encourage a taste for literature and a desire to read standard authors.

At its next meeting the Committee will view those language films which have already been made, and it was agreed that if possible some of these films should be shown to a class of children in the presence of the Committee. In the meantime enquiries will be made as to whether any work along the lines set out in the Committee's terms of reference is being carried out by other countries.

The Dominions, India and Colonies Panel has been considering Clause 7 of the Finance Bill 1935 and in particular Section 3 of that Clause. As is explained elsewhere, Clause 7 of the Finance Bill 1935 contains the legislation necessary for bringing into operation in this country the International Convention for Facilitating the Circulation of Educational Films. Under this Clause no customs duty will in future be charged on the importation into this country of any cinematograph film which is certified by the Board of Education, and this exemption is by Section 3 of the Clause extended to films produced by any person established in the British Empire, provided that the Board of Education is satisfied that the film is of an educational character and has been certified to be of such a character by the Government of the country in which the film was made and that the laws of that country provide for corresponding exemption from customs duty of films which have been produced by persons established in the United Kingdom. After consideration of this Clause with reference to the conditions of import now obtaining in various parts of the British Empire, the Panel passed a number of resolutions for the consideration of the Governors.

The Medical Panel has lately been engaged in making a selection of health films, produced in this country, for presentation at the International Conference on Hygiene and Public Health in Geneva.

In making its selection it was considerably assisted by the information it had already collected in compiling its catalogue. All the films were viewed by the Panel before despatch to Geneva.

The Physical Education Panel is continuing its work of collaboration in the production of physical education films. The films already made have been widely appreciated. Reels demonstrating infants' work are practically completed.



### Meeting with Manufacturers of Apparatus

A meeting was held this quarter between manufacturers of cinematograph projection apparatus and the General Purposes Committee of the Governors. Mr. A. C. Cameron was in the Chair. Mr. Lambert said that the Governors were anxious to discuss with manufacturers of apparatus means by which the difficulties in the way of speedy and large scale installation of projectors in schools could be obviated. Amongst the matters discussed, following Mr. Lambert's statement, were sizes and types of projectors, the proposal of the Governors to compile and publish lists of approved apparatus conforming to specifications required by the British Film Institute, and lastly, possible economies in the holding of exhibitions and displays of apparatus by central co-ordination through the Film Institute.

### Bantu Educational Cinema Experiment

It was reported in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND that an important experiment into the possibilities of the film as an educational medium was being undertaken by the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council and that the British Film Institute had formed an Advisory Council. The Advisory Council has held its first meeting, with Lord Lugard in the Chair. The Executive Committee, which was then formed, has met since and selected films for immediate use in the experiment. Several organisations interested in the scheme have offered films free of charge, among these being *Port Sunlight* (Lever Brothers), *This Progress* (Austin Motors), *The Night Watchman's Story* (Cadbury Brothers). Sound records in native languages will be made to accompany the selected pictures which will be shown as the first trial programme. On the experience gained the producing unit, which has already sailed for East Africa, will be able to base its future programmes.

### National Association of Schoolmasters

The National Association of Schoolmasters has passed on to the Institute the resolutions adopted at its Annual Conference held at Swansea at Easter. They are as follows:—

*Visual Education*: "This Conference calls upon the Government to recognise the value of Visual Education in Elementary Schools by supporting, on a more liberal financial scale, the British Film Institute."

*Films in the Schools*: "That, having regard to the high price of projectors suitable for school use and the constant improvements in pattern, both of which facts make their purchase by individual schools uneconomic, Local Education Authorities be asked to purchase a sufficient number of projectors for loan to the schools in their respective areas, or alternatively to establish suitable centres at which educational films could be exhibited and where the projectors could be established permanently."

*Training of Teachers in the Technique of Projection*: "That the British Film Institute be asked to explore the possibilities of establishing training classes for teachers in the technique of projection, so as to ensure that the film shall be used in its proper place in education."

### Amateur Film Festival

The Institute will organise through its Scottish Film Council an important Amateur Film Festival in Glasgow, probably on the 18th January, 1936. Two years ago the Meteor Film Producing Society held in the Athenaeum Theatre, Glasgow, what is said to have been the first festival of amateur films held in Great Britain. The adjudicator was Mr. Victor Saville. Last year the second festival was held in the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow, in the presence of an audience of approximately 700 persons. The adjudicator on this occasion was Mr. Andrew Buchanan.

The Meteor Society, which was one of the bodies associated in the formation of the Scottish Film Council has arranged that the Festival shall now be managed by the Council and it is being organised by the Council's Amateur Cinematography Panel, which has appointed a Festival Sub-Committee. The officers, who have been selected from four amateur cine societies, include: Mr. Stanley L. Russell (*Chairman*), Mr. Ian S. Ross, 80, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1. (*Hon. Secretary*), Mr. J. Moffat (*Assistant Hon. Secretary*), and Mr. J. More (*Hon. Treasurer*). It is hoped that the adjudicator will be Mr. John Grierson.

Films are divided into four classes:

*Class A.* Story Films open to Clubs in Great Britain.

*Class B.* Interest Films open to Clubs in Great Britain.

*Class C.* Films of any description open to individuals resident in Scotland.

*Class D.* Sound Films of any description open to Clubs or individuals in Great Britain—35mm. only.

All films submitted will be exhibited in the Meteor Society's Studios at meetings to which the public will be admitted up to the seating accommodation (50) of the hall. The prize-winning films will be exhibited in the Lyric Theatre (seating accommodation 1,200). It is expected that the prize in each class will be £10. The Saville Cup will be awarded to the most meritorious film shown at the Festival. An amateur is defined, for purposes of the Festival, as a person "who does not earn his livelihood through the Photographic or Cinema Industry," and amateur societies are societies composed of such persons. Entry forms, which can be obtained from Mr. Ross, must be returned to him not later than the 1st November.

### Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner of the Institute has been fixed for Tuesday, October 1st, 1935.

### SCARBOROUGH FILM SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

The Scarborough Film School Scholarship announced in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND has been awarded to Mr. Gordon C. Hales, of 36, Constable Road, Ipswich, for his paper on "Recent Developments of the Sound Film."



## NEWS FROM BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES

**BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** Mrs. E. J. Hutchins, Cowichan, Withdean Crescent, Brighton.

The members of this branch met on June 6th when Mr. Job, of the Felcourt School, East Grinstead, spoke on "The Use of the Cinema in a Modern School." Mr. Job was able to draw on his own practical experience in discussing the most effective ways of using films for educational purposes and in comparing the value to the teachers of the sound and silent film.

He spoke warmly of the work done by the British Film Institute in encouraging the production of films for use in schools.

The discussion which followed the address showed the interest of his audience in this subject.

**BECONTREE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

On April 26th a Conference of some twenty representatives of local organisations and approximately fifty students of the Dagenham Adult Institute was held at Halbutt Street School. Following an exhibition of selected educational films, the conference was opened by Mr. W. B. Reidie, representing the Essex Education Committee. The principal speakers were Alderman Blizard, L.C.C., Councillor A. J. Chorley, Dagenham Urban District Council, and Mr. Wm. Farr, of the British Film Institute. A general discussion followed and it was resolved that a branch of the British Film Institute should be formed. An interim committee was appointed to consider matters of local organisation and to report to a later conference. A meeting of this committee has been held, at which the Branch was formally constituted, and Mr. W. B. Reidie was appointed as Chairman.

**BRISTOL FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** Rev. S. W. Edwards, 75, Springfield Avenue, Ashley Down, Bristol.

In connection with the formation of a Film Institute Society at Bristol, a representative meeting was held at the beginning of April at which the Bishop of Malmesbury presided. An outline of the purposes, constitution and financial basis of the Institute was given. Questions and discussions followed, and a resolution to form a Bristol and District F.I. Society was moved by Miss Cottell, Secretary of the Children's Cinema Council and seconded by Mr. Atkinson, Chairman of the District Cinema Managers' Association. A committee of nine was appointed to consider matters of local organisation and arrange for the calling of a further meeting. A short selection of instructional films was then shown and literature of the Film Institute distributed. The inaugural public meeting of the Branch will be held in September.

**CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** G. A. Wilkins, 57, Orchard Avenue, Chichester, Sussex.

The Chichester Branch of the British Film Institute has utilised the summer months to bring before our Associate Members in particular, something of the importance of the aims of the Institute. To this end constant contact has been made with the managers of the local cinemas and a circular issued to all members providing them with information designed to secure their wholehearted co-operation. In addition, a short resumé of the B.F.I. criticisms of films coming to Chichester has been issued in advance. The formation of a Cine Camera Club within the membership has also been undertaken, from the activities of which the branch hopes to secure a body of film-interested people who will be able to bring technical experience to bear upon the right judgment of public films.

In October the Branch proposes to arrange for a meeting of all members at which will be provided speakers on various aspects of the film industry and, in addition, to debate a specially selected "A" Film.

The "Associate" membership now totals 52, and interest in the activities of the branch is steadily growing.

**LEEDS FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** S. A. Crawford, 3, Hares Mount, Shepherds Lane, Leeds, 8.

In co-operation with Mr. Drummond, of the Department of Agriculture at Leeds University, a short film show was arranged for the first Annual General Meeting of Young Farmers Clubs at York on May 18th.

A series of shows of four famous Russian films was arranged and carried out for a Workers Society in Leeds. The films were *The General Line*, *Potemkin*, *The New Babylon*, and *Mother* and were given on March 20th, April 3rd, April 16th and May 1st respectively; the first three films had never been shown in Leeds previously.

More members are required before the Leeds branch will be able to carry on any regular activities apart from the publication to members of a monthly bulletin of recommended films. A renewed publicity effort to increase membership is about to begin.

**LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Secs:** Miss O. Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4., and R. M. Findlay, 13, Crescent Mansions, Elgin Crescent, London, W.11.

The Society has arranged two public meetings during the quarter. On April 16th at Film House, Wardour Street, Mr. Gerald Sanger, Editor of *British Movietone News*, gave a lecture on "News Reels—New and Old," which was illustrated by films, and Mr. Ralph Hyams, Editor of *Education* took the Chair. On May 30th, at the City Literary Institute, Mr. A. Clow Ford, the Society's Chairman, gave an address on "The Film in Adult Education." Mr. W. E. Williams, Secretary of the British Institute of Adult Education took the Chair, and Gaumont-British Instructional arranged a demonstration of 16 mm. sound films to illustrate the address. Amongst those shown were, *Roots*, *Shakespeare* and *Saxmunden*. Invitations to this meeting were issued to the leading Adult Education Organisations. The meeting was followed by an interesting discussion.

The Monthly Film Guide has been issued at the beginning of each month to members, and will be continued during the Summer.

The first Annual Meeting was held on Thursday, July 18th, at the Y.W.C.A. At this meeting the first Council of the Society was elected, and discussion took place on activities for the Autumn.

The membership of the Society is growing, and the Committee anticipate a large increase in the Autumn, when the programme of activities has been decided upon.

**MANCHESTER & DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.:** J. Norman Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

The Society has now concluded the work of its first season and on Friday, May 31st, held its First Annual General Meeting, at which the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts were adopted and the new form of constitution for Branches approved. Mr. W. T. Stevenson took the Chair.

The Report pointed out that the Society had held three public meetings since its inception in December; a lecture by Mr. Hugh Grey, of Gaumont-British Research Department, on "Accuracy in Relation to the Making of Films"; a lecture, illustrated with a film, by Mr. Frederick Watts, on "The Making of News-Reels"; the first public demonstration in Europe of the new R.C.A. Photophone 16mm. projectors and cameras. These meetings were attended by 76, 210 and 70 members respectively. The Society had increased its Full Membership to 14 and its Associate Membership to 16 and several new members have been elected for the coming year. The slowness of increase in the membership and the financial loss were to be attributed chiefly to the usual difficulties of a society commencing operations in the spring. Moreover, as all the meetings had been free and open to the public, people did not feel inclined to pay a subscription for meetings which they could attend without doing so. There were already ample signs that the point of these meetings would be seen in a good initial membership for the coming season.

The Society, besides holding these meetings, had accomplished another good piece of work in bringing into touch



the amateur cinematographic societies with the educational bodies; this had already proved fruitful and was likely to be more so in the future.

Under the new constitution it was decided to have a Council including the maximum of twenty ordinary members of the Society, which should elect a small executive committee. It was agreed to elect the officers and six of the Committee at the meeting and to leave it to the Council to co-opt new members as and when desirable. It was also decided to leave to the Council the duty of appointing a President and Vice-Presidents.

The subscription for Associate Membership was fixed at 5/- per annum and the meeting agreed to the outline programme for the new session submitted by Messrs. P. Le Neve Foster and the Secretary, on the behalf of the Committee. This included the arranging of six or eight lectures by persons prominent in cinematograph work, including Miss Mary Field, Mr. Cedric Belfrage and, it was hoped, Mr. R. S. Lambert, Mr. Higginson and others; a show of films produced by local amateurs and a show of publicity films, in addition to one or two demonstrations of apparatus and two shows for children. It was also proposed to prepare and issue a monthly film guide and to establish a clearing-house for information on the cinema in Manchester and district. The work of close co-operation with other local cinematographic societies, with educational bodies and with trade interests will also continue and be extended.

**MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : 5 & 6, Blue Coat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.**

The last Special Film Show of the winter season was given on April 12th, when *Men and Jobs* (Russia), *Dawn to Dawn* (U.S.A.) and *Joie de Vivre* and *Night on the Bare Mountain* (France) were shown at the Prince of Wales Cinema.

Discussions at the Society's Rooms on *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* and on the films shown by the Society during the season were opened by Mr. Cyril Ray and Mr. J. Alex Parker and provoked some interesting contributions from members.

At the Annual General Meeting an encouraging report on the year 1934/35 was given by the Chairman and some interesting developments for next season were outlined. Amongst other arrangements, members of the Society are already at work preparing material for a series of lectures and discussions on individual directors and producing units.

Officers for the season 1935/36 were unanimously elected as follows: *Chairman*: F. Heming Vaughan (re-elected). *Hon. Sec.*: J. Alex. Parker. *Joint Assistant Secretaries*: Miss M. A. Bird and Cyril Ray.

A Demonstration of Instructional Sound Films, by courtesy of G-B. Instructional Ltd. was given before the Liverpool Association of Schoolmasters on May 27th at the University of Liverpool. The films were introduced by Mr. H. Houghton, Vice-Principal of Liverpool Collegiate School. Following this Demonstration, a meeting of Head Teachers of the South Liverpool Area was held in the Society's rooms. Proposals for showing films to their scholars at a suitable centre were discussed and it was unanimously agreed to co-operate with the Merseyside F.I. Society in promoting this plan.

Some pioneer work by Mr. Houghton with a class for film appreciation has suggested the desirability of forming a Junior Film Institute Society. It is proposed to begin with the senior pupils in the Secondary Schools. Several groups, by permission, have already met at the Society's rooms, at the invitation of the Chairman, and the idea has been most warmly approved. Plans for the Autumn are being vigorously pursued.

**NORTHERN IRELAND FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. (pro tem) W. H. Welply, Rantalard, Whitehouse, Belfast.**

The General Meeting of the Branch was held on Friday, May 10th, when the outgoing Hon. Secretary, Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse and the Hon. Treasurer respectively, presented their reports on the working of the branch for the previous year. These reports were satisfactory on the whole in spite of a small deficit in the banking account.

Several speakers urged the need for increased membership and every effort is to be made to bring the numbers up to 1,000. With such support it is felt that much more may be done to extend the scope of the monthly Bulletin, which there is evidence to show is much appreciated, as well as to widen the sphere of activity of the Branch.

The Marquis of Dufferin has become President of the Branch, and Lady Moore, Lady Brooke, Viscount Charlemont and the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, Vice-Presidents, a list which it is hoped to enlarge gradually.

Mr. A. N. Bonaparte Wyse, C.B.E., has become Chairman of the Committee, which now consists of nineteen members, the two most recent additions being representatives of the Federal Council of Teachers in Northern Ireland.

For the months of July and August the holiday season, the activities of the Branch are suspended, but it is hoped that the Marquis of Dufferin may visit the Branch in the late autumn or in the winter and deliver an address.

Meanwhile, the watchword is to be "recruitment."

**SALFORD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Manchester.**

In the last issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND* it was reported that special demonstrations of educational films had been arranged at which over 1,000 teachers attended. Teachers were circularised and informed of the aims and objects of the British Film Institute and invited to become members. This work of publicity has been continued. The Secretary has been active in endeavouring to interest teachers and has further plans to bring them into contact with the branch.

**SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Interim Hon. Sec. : C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2.**

The Entertainment Panel of the Scottish Film Council is having discussions with members of the film trade in connection with its scheme for recommending films. The Education Panel, except for its sub-committee which has prepared a list of suitable films for next season's children's Saturday morning matinees, has not been very active during the last few weeks as it has been waiting for the formation on the 15th June of the Scottish Educational Film Association, with which it will have close contacts. The Social Service Panel is organising a joint meeting between the Scottish film trade and representatives of social service bodies at which these representatives will have the opportunity of expressing their views on the exhibition of unsuitable films to children. The Amateur Cinematography Panel has been formed and is organising a Festival (see page 92). A sub-committee has been appointed jointly with the Scottish National Development Council to supervise the production of films for the Scottish Special (Depressed) Areas Commission. Very satisfactory progress is being made towards the formation of the Dundee and St. Andrews Film Society and the Ayrshire Film Society. In September a public meeting is to be held in Dumfries with the purpose of forming the Western Borders Branch of the Film Institute. Beginning in September, the Scottish Film Council will issue a monthly bulletin to Scottish members of the Institute, to members of Scottish Panels and, it is hoped, to members of bodies associated in the formation of the Council. It is expected that the Bulletin will have a circulation of several thousands.

*Branches are also being formed for the following districts:*

**HUDDERSFIELD, Hon. Sec. : S. W. Bonarjee, 72, New North Road, Huddersfield.**

**NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE, Hon. Sec. : c/o British Film Institute, 4, Gt. Russell Street, London, W.C.1.**

**NORTHAMPTON, Hon. Sec. : C. H. Smith, 131, Wellingborough Road, Northampton.**

**BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.**

The last two meetings of the season were on April 14th and May 12th and the following films were shown: *Paris-Mediterranee*, *Zero de Conduite* (Jean Vigo), *War Debts*, *The Moon*, *New Europe* (Atlantic Diagrammatic



Films) *Joie de Vivre* (Hoppin and Gross) and *Ces Messieurs de la Sante* (Pathe-Natan). At the meeting on May 12th voting papers were issued on which members were invited to indicate their preferences for types of short films and to suggest films already shown by the Society which they would like revived. Disney cartoons proved to be the favourite type of short films and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, closely followed by *Le Million*, was the film most members would like to see again. There have been 729 members of the Society during the past season.

**FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW**, Hon. Sec.: D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The Society's season closed on March 17th when the following programme was submitted:—*Refugees*, *Le Million* and *Joie de Vivre*.

On March 3rd Mr. W. N. McLaren and Mr. William McLean exhibited their sub-standard film *Nine Till Six*, which recently won the Saville Cup in the Amateur Film Festival at Glasgow, and there was a general discussion.

It has been a successful season. The membership list had to be closed at the end of the first meeting, and in January afternoon meetings were begun at which the average attendance approached one hundred. As far as may be estimated from its numerical strength the Society is in a healthy position and is achieving its aim to present to the people of Glasgow worthwhile films of artistic or cultural value not normally seen in the commercial cinema. Among the films shown during the season were: *La Maternelle*, *Liebes Kommando*, *L'Ordonnance*, *Marie*, *Ces Messieurs de la Sante* and *Charlemagne*.

**LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY**, Hon. Sec.: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

The Fourth Annual General Meeting was held on May 25th when the chief business was to adopt the Annual Report and elect officers and Council. At the conclusion of the meeting a programme of films was presented comprising *Royal Windsor* (Gaumont-British Miniature) *The Cathode Ray Oscillograph* and *Pett and Pott*, a G.P.O. film directed by A. Cavalcanti.

The films shown during the season include *Rien que les Heures*, *Contact*, *Morgenrot*, *Thunder over Mexico*, *Rapt*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *Anna und Elisabeth*.

A number of lectures and exhibitions were also arranged.

**MANCHESTER & SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY**, Sec.: 86, Hulton Street, Salford, 5.

The last performance of the season was given on Saturday, April 13th, at the Rivoli Cinema. The films shown were *Weather Forecast*, *All Quiet in the East*, and *Sabra* (Cactus). It is proposed to commence next season's activities in September and programmes will be drawn from the following films amongst others: *Hey Rup*, *Miracle of Life*, *Dawn to Dawn*, *Dood Wasser*, *The Idea*, *Rescue*, *Thunder in the Air*, *The Deserter*, *Man and Jobs*, *The Soil is Thirsty*, and *Blow, Bugles, Blow*.

**MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE**, Sec.: T. H. Baxter, F.R.G.S., 59, New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

This Committee has successfully completed another season of intensive work in the showing of its five films. Its standard films have been shown widely with considerable success during the last seven months. At some places the attendances have been remarkable, notably Birmingham, Bristol, Ayr, Leyton, Lewisham, Glasgow and Wimbledon. The large Town Hall at Wimbledon was filled three times in one day and people actually turned away. At Leyton the New Baths Hall was used for the first time for a cinema showing and a triumph was achieved in obtaining a good picture with a fit-up show and a throw of 170 feet with A.C. supply. At Glasgow on the final day so great was the demand that five showings were given in the day and 4,000 paid for admission.

The M.F.C. has its own van, projectors and operators. Carrying through its own showings, it has gained experience and amassed information which is unique to-day for the

road-travelling of films. Smaller places are not neglected and successful efforts have been held in towns where there is only a small hall and no electric supply.

To meet the wishes of its constituency three of the films have been reduced to 16mm. and a fourth will be added for next season. The demand for these is overwhelming. Clergy and ministers have been advised as to purchase of projectors and supplied on special terms.

The aim of the M.F.C. is not only to show, but to produce and distribute missionary films. Commencing in 1924 with a small capital the M.F.C. has succeeded in paying its way and producing five films in ten years. It is hoped that two new 35mm. films will be ready in the near future. The M.F.C. consists of representatives of Anglican and Free Church Societies. In its eleventh year it can claim as the pioneer of co-operative missionary films and religious films to have justified its existence.

**NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY**, Sec.: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, Stoke Newington, N.16.

The Society's activities have ended for the season 1934-35. Applications for membership for the coming autumn season will be welcomed.

**RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY**, Sec.: O. A. Minns, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Since April the lessened demand for supplies of films, equipment and exhibition programmes has given opportunity for reviewing the rather strenuous activities of the past season. Among other items of interest to be recorded may be mentioned the following:—

(a) We have made over 200 "contacts" with Churches and similar organisations—using films—thereby providing a useful constituency of which no other record exists. To this extent the Religious Film Society may fairly claim to have justified its existence during the 18 months since it started operations.

(b) That the large number of requests we have received for information and assistance in the selection and supply of films, and/or apparatus suited to their specific purposes, indicates an extensive potential demand waiting to be satisfied. The enquirers are mainly anxious to be assured regarding adequate supplies of films dealing with religious, temperance and moral subjects, both silent and "talkie" and especially with the efficient performance of sub-standard projectors for the latter.

(c) These two factors deserve the careful consideration of film producers, and of manufacturers of equipment at more popular prices than obtain at present.

*We are wondering if there be some among the readers of SIGHT AND SOUND who will co-operate with us in meeting this great opportunity—on adequate lines?*

(d) Meantime, our first two religious films, *Mastership* and *Inasmuch* continue to win high praise, often from unexpected quarters.

(e) We expect to have two or three new "talkies" available for the autumn—one is now actually in production.

Silent editions of *David Livingstone* will also be ready in 9.5, 16 and 35mm. The music version is still obtainable in 35mm. and it is hoped to issue both standard and 16mm. editions (possibly 17.5mm. also) with descriptive commentary in September.

**TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY**, Hon. Sec.: c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

The Society's second season has seen it firmly established and in a very healthy state. The membership rose to 771 in the Spring session of this year. From October, 1934, to April, 1935, seven Sunday evening exhibitions of films in the Haymarket Theatre were arranged, three displays of outstanding 16mm. films took place, and two successful children's matinees were organised with the co-operation of the Modern Languages Association.

One of the most important objects of the Society is to make provision for the study of film art. It is hoped to arrange a course of lectures on film art and cinematography in the 1935-6 session. The discussions in the club room, Haymarket House, on the Tuesday evenings following Sunday exhibitions, have afforded members opportunities of meeting and pooling opinions.



## TECHNICAL AND TRADE REVIEWS

## DR. RUSSELL J. REYNOLDS' X-RAY CINEMATOGRAPHY INSTALLATION

By H. D. Waley

SPECIAL APPARATUS No. 2

The following are particulars of the X-Ray cinema technique which Dr. Russell Reynolds has developed.

No. 1 in this series described Dr. Canti's photomicrograph cinema installation at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and No. 3 will describe the Western-Electric-Kodak High Speed camera.

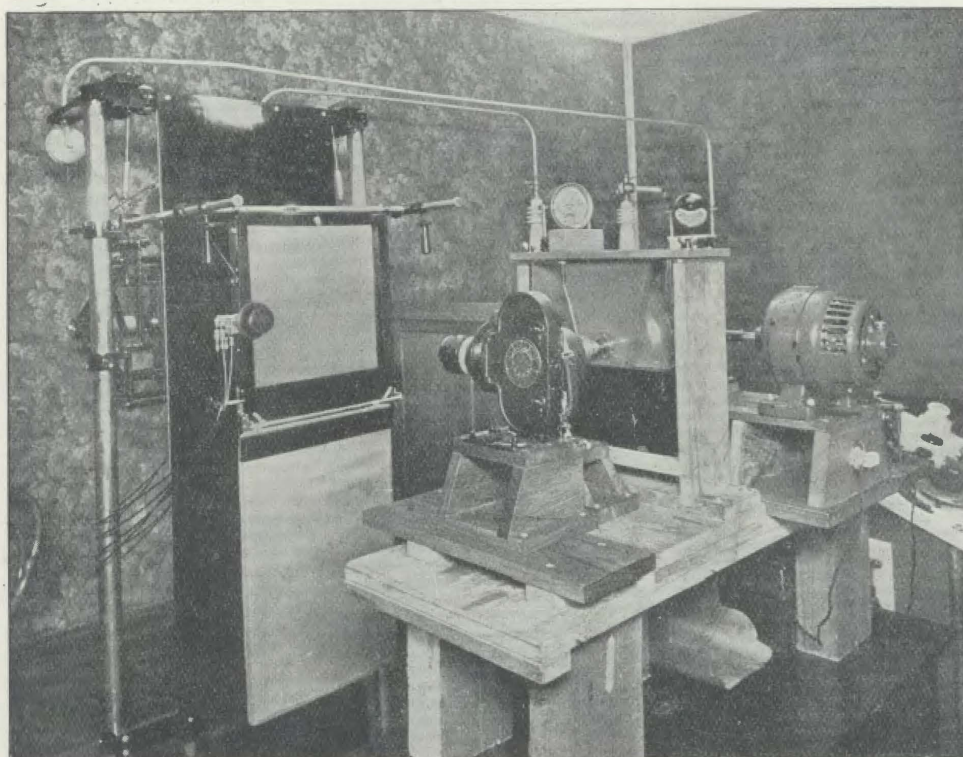


Fig. 1. General lay-out of the apparatus viewed from behind the camera.

L. to R. Tube, fluorescent screen, camera, synchronising switch, motor.

**T**HE conditions of X-ray photography are so far removed from those of ordinary photography that it may be useful to begin with a few general remarks on this point.

#### Conditions of X-Ray Photography

Ordinary light falling on to a camera goes in through its lens and is kept out by the rest of its structure. X-rays falling on the camera would behave in an exactly opposite fashion. They would be unable to pass through the lens, but would stream on to the film through the walls of the camera and fog the emulsion. If this state of affairs represented the whole story it is clear that photography in the usual sense of the word would be impossible where X-rays are concerned. The only technique available would be that of the skiagram—the casting,

that is to say, of a direct shadow on the sensitive emulsion without any intervention of an image-forming lens. To take a rather crude example the rectangular patch of unfaded wallpaper behind a long-unmoved picture is a rudimentary sort of skiagram. For single stationary records this method has hitherto sufficed, but it will be easily realised that it is most unsuitable for the purposes of cinema photography. The shadows of objects cannot for this purpose be smaller than the objects themselves, and human beings are constructed on such a scale that their principal units are considerably larger than the units of film which can be conveniently run in jerks for a rapid series of exposures. Nevertheless, the earlier steps in X-ray cinematography did perforce follow this method: a band of film some 8 inches wide replaced the ordinary fixed plate and a series of large shadow-pictures were obtained on this band. For projection purposes these were either re-photographed direct on to cinema film or copied by hand, to gain more emphatic tone-contrasts, and re-photographed.



### Fluorescent Screen

Fortunately the starting point for an alternative method lies in the use of the fluorescent screen. This converts the X-rays—a very small portion of them, that is to say—into ordinary light rays. By the use of a camera with a body armoured against the unconverted X-rays and a lens opened up to an exceedingly rapid aperture the light rays emanating from the fluorescent screen can be induced to form an ordinary photographic image sufficiently intense for cinema photography at normal, and even slightly accelerated, speed. The necessity for making the most of the meagre light-output of fluorescent screens is the key to the design of X-ray cinema apparatus employing an image-focussing lens and normal cinema film. The method involves high output from the X-ray tube, a suitable relationship between the wave-length of the fluorescent screen's emanation and the sensitivity-range of the film emulsion and the widest possible lens aperture. The question of shielding the patient from an overdose of X-rays is also involved.

With regard to the tube itself Dr. Reynolds now employs a Philips 10 K.W. tube with a .5mm. Aluminium filter run at a maximum of ma.60, K.V.110. A one valve power unit was found unexpectedly to give better results than a four valve unit. The fluorescent screen was prepared by Messrs. Ilford for Dr. Reynolds as an improvement on the S.X. screen which he had found, owing to the bluish tendency of its light emission, to be (in combination with ortho film) the best existing screen for his purposes. The results of yellow-green fluorescence in combination with supersensitive panchromatic emulsion had proved to be less good. In order to make the fullest use of the characteristics

of the special screen Messrs. Ilford prepared a special film by coating ordinary 16mm. film with X-ray emulsion. The question of the most suitable developer received consideration and after many experiments the following formula was adopted.

|                          |     |     |   |       |                |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|---|-------|----------------|
| Methol                   | ..  | ..  | 5 | grams | } Solution I.  |
| Hydroquinone             | ..  | ..  | 8 | "     |                |
| Sodium Carbonate (Cryst) | 100 | "   |   |       | } Solution II. |
| Sodium Sulphite          | ..  | 100 | " |       |                |
| Potassium Bromide        | ..  | 5   | " |       |                |
| Water to 1,000 cc.       |     |     |   |       |                |

The optimum time for development was found to be eight minutes at 65 degrees F.

### Lens and Focussing

The lens at present in use is a Zeiss with a focal length of about 5.5cms. and an aperture of 0.85 which covers a field of 10 x 18 inches at a distance of 5 feet 3 inches.

With so large an aperture focussing is very critical and a focus obtained by means of lamp-light reflected from a focussing card will not hold good for the much bluer light emitted by the screen. The following procedure was therefore adopted.

A clear-cut metallic grid was placed just behind the fluorescent screen and this was used as an object to be photographed when illuminated by the rays. At first a rough focus was obtained with the card; fine adjustments were then made with the lens micrometer screws on each side of a central position obtained with the card. A series of exposures were made, each marked for identification on a length of film. This enabled the most accurate position to be decided.

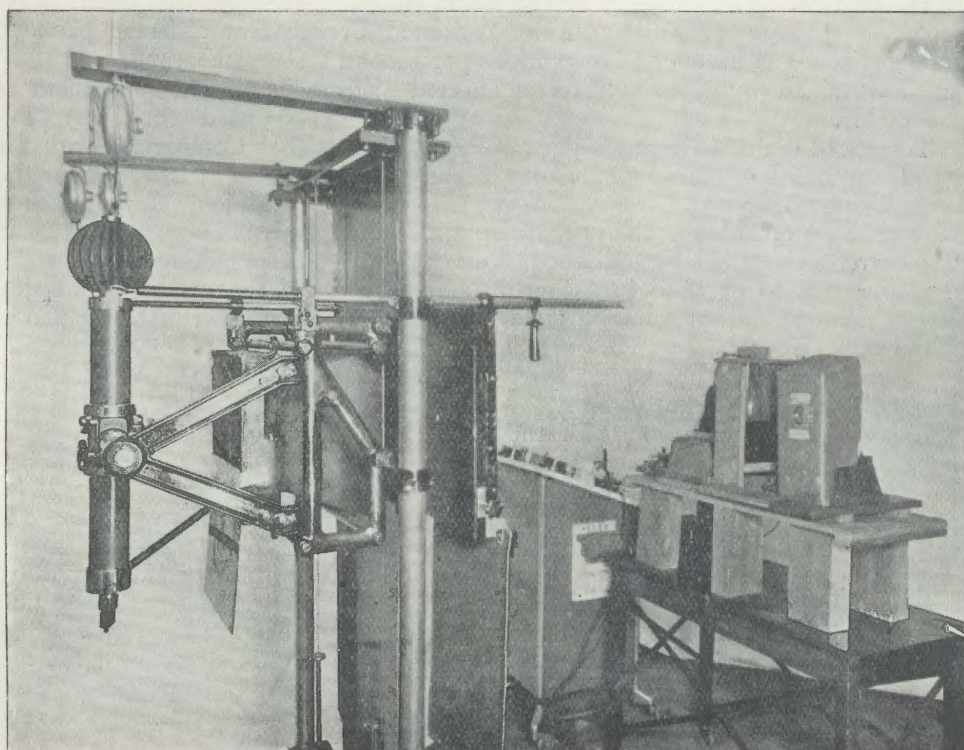


Fig. 2. View of the apparatus from behind the X-ray tube.  
L. to R. X-ray tube, fluorescent screen, motor, Synchronising switch, camera (in lead shield).



### Structure of Camera

The camera is armoured against the entry of the unconverted X-rays by a lead casing 3mm. thick, which can be seen in position in Fig. 2. It is driven through a synchronising device which cuts off the current from the X-ray tube while the camera shutter is in the closed position. The patient, therefore, is subjected to 50 per cent. only of the radiation which he would otherwise receive and the strain on the tube is similarly reduced.

The synchronising switch takes the form of a rotary contact breaker. It consists of a disc of keramot, 10 in. in diameter and 1 in. thick. The axis of the disc is continuous with the driving spindle of the camera mechanism. The lower half of the disc is immersed in a glass tank of pure paraffin oil. Around the circumference seven phosphor-bronze strips of equal length are arranged, equidistant from one another. They are slightly longer than 1/14th of the circumference of the disc and they project slightly from the surface of the disc itself. The front ends of these are connected with a flat brass ring, 7 in. in diameter, let flush into one side of the disc. Permanently engaging with the brass ring is a two-leaved spring copper contact. This is placed beneath the surface of the oil. A copper lead passes from this to a terminal at the top of the disc frame work. The phosphor-bronze strips arranged on the circumference of the disc make contact in turn with another two-leaved spring copper contact when the disc is rotated.

To avoid vibration, a small universal joint is put into the rotating axis just before it joins the camera mechanism.

A dog clutch is fitted on each side of the disc mechanism so that the latter can be disconnected both from the motor drive and the driving spindle of the camera. The switch is driven by an electric motor, the speed of which can be regulated by resistances. The number of revolutions per second are ascertained by a tachometer connected with the motor.

The speed desirable depends principally of course upon the speed of movement of the organ which is being photographed.

A switch is included in the primary circuit so that the current can be short-circuited, thus enabling the apparatus to be used in the ordinary way for screen examinations previous to taking a cinematograph film.

### Progress of X-Ray Photography

Exposures of various parts of the human body have been made; the joints, movements of the heart and thorax, the act of swallowing and the passage of an opaque meal through the oesophagus, stomach and duodenum with satisfactory results in every case.

The progress of X-ray cinematography will undoubtedly lead to clearer understanding both of the normal and abnormal functioning of the active organs.

It should prove of immense value in investigating lesions of the lungs and pleurae, especially after

lipiodol injections, or in cases where artificial pneumothorax has been induced. As regards movements in the alimentary tract in pathological states, the advantage of being able to study such movements indefinitely after the administration of an opaque medium is obvious. In orthopaedic lesions, the range of movements in limbs and joints can be observed after an injury and in those cases where an operation has been performed, progress can be recorded and studied at intervals. It will also add greatly to our knowledge of the functioning of the heart, especially in the various irregularities arising in cardiac lesion, for instance, in a sino-auricular block.

Apart from the clinical uses mentioned, there are, of course, other fields of usefulness, for instance, the investigation of physiological problems where use may be made of opaque media injected into the circulatory system in animals.

Those who are concerned with the technique of the teaching film and have noted the development of the 'cyclic' film by the Dance-Kaufmann Company will be interested in the fact that the short endless band suggests itself inevitably as the most satisfactory format for the X-ray film of physiological functioning.

The advantages of the present method may be summarised as follows:—

(1) The cinematograph method described enables one to obtain a rapid, inexpensive and permanent record of the functioning of active organs.

(2) The continuous "band" enables one to study movement for an indefinite period, whereas an ordinary screen examination can, for various obvious reasons, only be carried out for a very short period.

These advantages are specially obvious in organs such as the heart, where one wants to examine several different parts in a state of movement at the same time.

(3) The permanent records of movements may be used for: (a) Purely diagnostic purposes. (b) Comparison with former records to watch the effects of treatment or the progress of a pathological condition. (c) Teaching purposes. (d) Transmission abroad or elsewhere, either for the purpose of obtaining specialists' opinions as to the nature of the case, or for information purposes as to the condition of the patient in the past.

## DAYLIGHT PROJECTION IN THE CLASSROOM

(Continued from page 88)

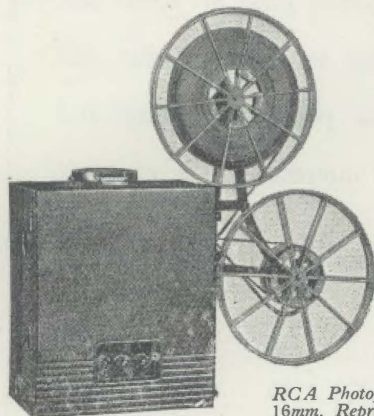
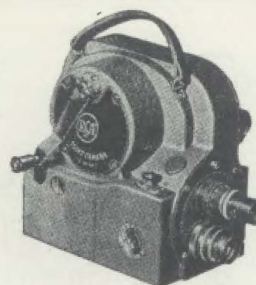
miraculous qualities. It is true that the materials I have suggested, because they were readily accessible, are not ideal. Ground glass has too little diffusive power and paper and linen too much. Nevertheless, the main problem of daylight showing is, and I think always will be, the intensifying of the light from the projector and the shielding of the screen from extraneous light to the greatest possible degree.

H.D.W.



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# EVOLUTION OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

With special reference to the collection of historical apparatus in the  
Science Museum at South Kensington

## No. 2 EVOLUTION OF THE CINEMA CAMERA

THE main difficulty in understanding the evolution of the cinema camera is that of banishing from the mind all preconceptions derived from existing knowledge.

On our left as we enter the gallery from the lift is displayed a Williamson camera, a typical instrument displaying all the features which have now been stabilised for nearly forty years, a perforated flexible film, a claw intermittent movement, a rotating shutter and so forth. If we can succeed in wiping these clean out of our minds we shall be in a better position to appreciate the problem which presented itself to the pioneers.

It is possible to divide the pioneers into two groups and it is interesting to watch them converging on a single point.

### The Scientists

One group consisted of scientists for whom the camera was an instrument of analysis. It revealed to them details about various sorts of motion. For each enquiry a separate instrument was designed appropriate to the speed and size of the moving object. Thus in 1874 Janssen, a Swede (the cinema's debt to Sweden antedates the birth of Greta Garbo) recorded the passage of Venus across the Sun by the use of a 'revolver' producing 18 images at intervals of 70 seconds round the edge of a circular glass plate.

In 1877 Muybridge, an English photographer working in California, carried out his well-known investigation into the movements of horses. The picturesque tale that he settled a bet of £5,000 between two millionaires as to whether a galloping horse ever has all four feet off the ground at once must, I fear, be dismissed as apocryphal. But even without this garnishing, the occasion must have been impressive. The animals to be photographed defiled between an avenue of some two dozen cameras placed at intervals on one side and a white screen marked boldly into spatial divisions on the other. From each camera a wire carrying a small electric current stretched across the course. The current

in each case energised a magnet which held out of action a gravity-operated shutter. As the horse snapped each wire in turn the current was broken, the shutter worked and an exposure was made. The scale on the screen appeared in the photograph and gave the animal's exact position at the time of each exposure. Samples of Muybridge's later work, arranged on a disc for projection, are to be seen in a floor case half way down the gallery.

Since 1872 Muybridge had been investigating the movement of horses by means of separate snapshots, but never before had he been able to obtain a properly co-ordinated sequence. It must be noted, however, that he achieved his aim by a special arrangement of ordinary cameras, not by the construction of a specially designed camera. His contemporary, E. J. Marey, the French Physiologist, on the other hand devised a number of special devices for the photographic recording of motion and ended up by a very close approach to the modern cinema camera. Marey began by exposing a fixed plate to a series of glimpses of the moving subject obtained through narrow slots in a rotating disc or discs. One sees the influence of the old zoetrope-toy on this design. It was, of course, necessary to use a black background for this method. Fig. 1 shows the rather pleasantly sculpturesque results which he obtained. But the method was unsuitable for use with more elusive subjects, such as birds. So in 1882 Marey set to work and designed a 'photographic gun' capable of recording a sequence of 12 positions round the edge of a circular glass plate. The plate received intermittent movement from a clockwork device, the whole record covered a period of one second and each exposure was  $1/720$ th of a second only. Marey realised clearly the limita-

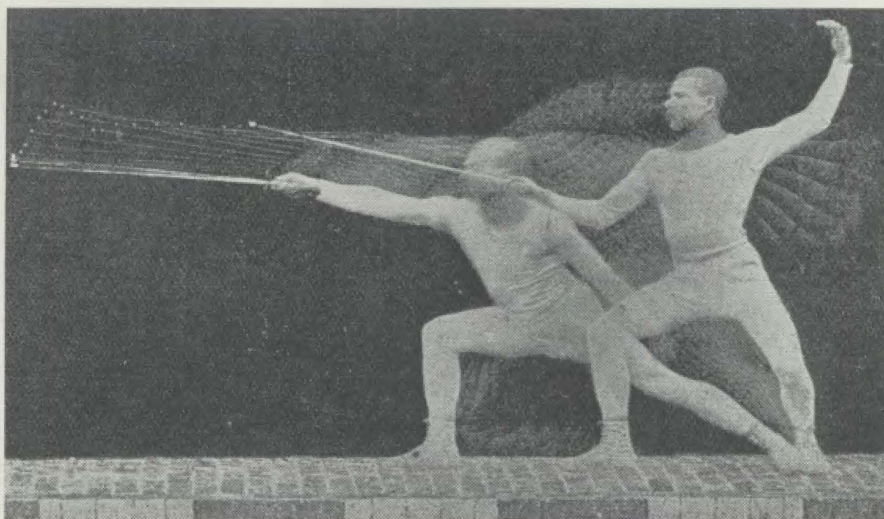


Fig. 1. Showing sculpturesque results obtained by Marey.

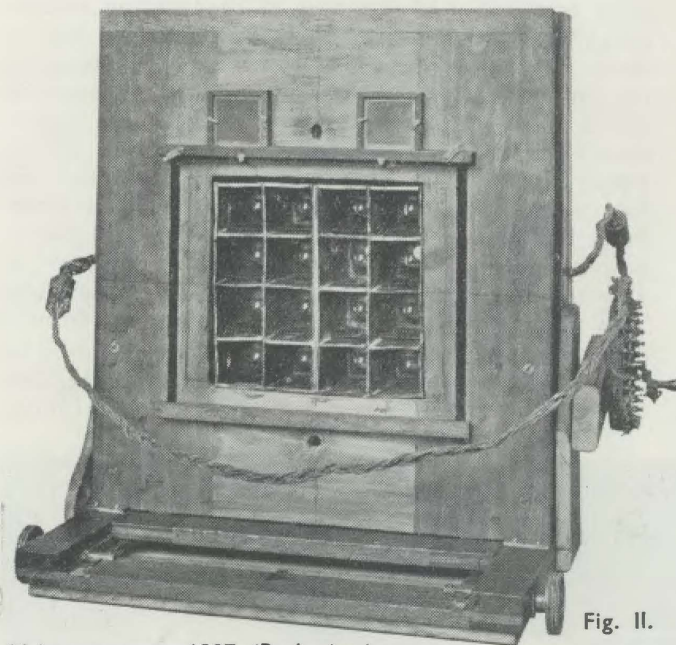


tions imposed on him by the inertia of his glass plate and set to work to find a substitute. Transparent waxed paper had been used for the making of the earliest photographic negatives and by 1889 Marey had perfected means of propelling a sensitised paper strip through his gun with regular intermittent motion. He had thus devised what was in all essentials a modern cinema camera.

### The Inventors

But by this time he had been overhauled by the inventors, the free-lances of the experimental world, to whom a cinema camera was an end in itself, not a means towards the accomplishment of a given piece of research.

The coming of the inventors had been heralded some time back by the filing of ingenious, but premature patents. In 1861 Dumont, a Frenchman, patented a one-lens cinema camera employing an endless band of glass plates. In 1864 another Frenchman, Ducos du Hauron, patented a camera achieving 36 successive exposures on different portions of a stationary plate. He proposed to employ 36 lenses and a kind of roller blind shutter. The first inventor to achieve practical results was, I believe, Leprince of Leeds, who, in 1886 or 7, made the multi-lens camera shown in illustration Fig. II. It represents a combination of Du Hauron's battery of lenses with Muybridge's electrically



16-lens camera, 1887 (Back-view).

released shutters. Muybridge's electric releases, however, worked by the horse, were only appropriate for photographing a single animal passing once across a given series of positions. Leprince's electric contacts were worked by the operator as the handle of the camera turned and were therefore universal in their application. Moreover, he was undoubtedly the first to make use of celluloid for the sensitive band.

In 1888 he made a further step in advance by

building the one-lens camera (see Fig. III.) which is one of the show-pieces of the Museum's collection. It can be established that this camera was in existence early in 1888, since a photograph of his mother-in-law, who died in October, 1888, taken with this camera, is displayed in the gallery. Leprince has therefore a strong claim to be ranked with Friese-Greene as an English pioneer of cinematography. Unfortunately the Museum

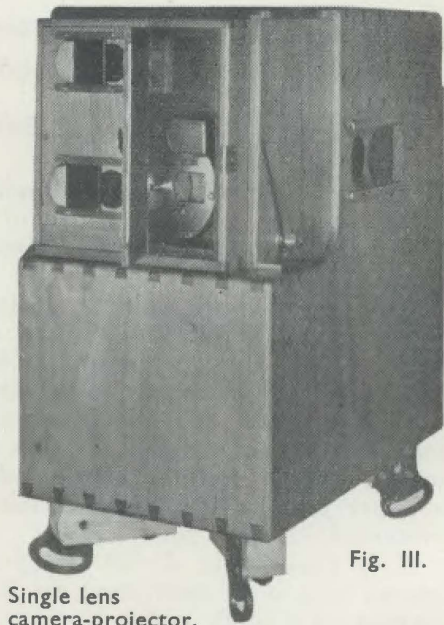


Fig. III.

Single lens camera-projector, 1888.

does not possess any of Friese-Greene's early cameras. After this point the evolution of the cinema camera proceeds smoothly towards its present state. In spite of Caslar's attempt to revive unperforated film it became recognised that perforations, though a source of mechanical weakness to the edge of the film, were a necessity for proper steadiness of the picture.

The width of the film, which had derived from the width of magic-lantern slides, diminished to the Edison gauge of 35mm. which was found appropriate as a compromise between excessive enlargement on the screen—the drawback of too narrow film, and excessive inertia—the drawback of too wide film. Three years ago there was a talk of widening the film again for the benefit of the sound-track, but the existing standards proved to have taken too firm a root and it now seems as if one of the only point on which all nations agree is the desirability of maintaining 35mm. as the standard width of cinema film. Accordingly the modern studio camera, though a greatly refined version of the old silent camera, does not differ from it fundamentally.

*The previous article in this series described "The Precursors of the Cinema" the next article will describe "The Evolution of the Cinema Projector."*

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